

**FROM SPECTRUM TO BEAM IN IRAQ  
ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION: COMBAT, STABILITY, AND BEYOND**

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## ABSTRACT

On 20 March 2003, the United States Army participated in the invasion of Iraq as part of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF). Despite the announcement from the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln of the end of major combat operations on 1 May 2003, the U.S. Army is still conducting maneuvers and missions throughout the cities and desert plains of Iraq. Fundamentally, the U.S. Army was incapable of translating initial combat success into the accomplishment of strategic objectives and political victory. What emerged from tactical and operational victories against Iraqi forces was not a stable democratic peace; instead, Iraq plunged into a long and complex insurgency that fused the spectrum of conflict into a single beam where the full range of military operations had to be performed nearly simultaneously.

Combating and defeating this insurgency required a capacity for conducting simultaneous full spectrum operations in a competitive environment populated by highly adaptive foes. But the U.S. Army was unprepared for this task. A Cycle of Mutual Adaptation between hierarchical and vertically integrated organizations and networked and horizontally integrated competitors ensued. The latter was predisposed to organizational adaptation and conducting networked operations in a decentralized fashion; the former was predisposed to quickly vanquishing threats along prescriptive plans with centralized command and control systems. How this competition unfolded and the implications of this process are the subject of this study.

Although the insurgency in Iraq has largely been quelled, the cyclical and competitive process producing this tenuous stability has raised serious questions regarding the efficacy of post-Cold War and post-9/11 strategies, force structures, doctrine, training, and the U.S. Army's organizational capacity for adaptation in light of national interests, strategic requirements, and institutional legacies. This study charts the historical factors contributing to the Cycle of Mutual

Adaptation in OIF, analyzes this cycle, gives an assessment of the international security environment in the wake of this conflict, and concludes with policy recommendations for improving the U.S. Army's capacity for organizational adaptation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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## **PREFACE**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

*“Man the knower pursues two related but distinct kinds of knowledge. As homo sciens, man the knower of scientia, he tends to matters of fact, quantity, matter, and the physical realm; as homo sapiens, man the knower of sapientia, he shows his interest in the qualities of meaning, purpose, value, idea, and the metaphysical realm. If we are to have truth, neither kind of knowledge can be denied or ignored. The denial of the reality and importance of scientia is characteristic of the radical transcendentalism of Eastern religions, but today the even greater and more damaging imbalance is found in the pervasive radical immanentism of much Western culture and thought that attributes validity only to scientia. Enthusiasts of scientism fail to see that scientia is utterly dependent on sapientia for direction and meaning; their fervent attempts to pursue scientia in isolation from sapientia amount to a tragic rush into the meaningless.”* Aeschliman<sup>1</sup>

*“The enemy’s only answer to militia actions is the sending out of frequent escorts as protection for his convoys and as guards on all his stopping places, bridges, defiles and the rest. The early efforts of the militia may be fairly weak, and so will these first detachments,*

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<sup>1</sup> Aeschliman, Michael D., *The Restitution of Man: C.S. Lewis and the Case Against Scientism*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing, Cambridge, UK, 1998, p. 48.

*because of the dangers of dispersal. But the flames of insurrection will be fanned by these small detachments, which will on occasion be overpowered by sheer numbers; courage and the appetite for fighting will rise, and so will the tension, until it reaches the climax that decides the outcome.” Clausewitz<sup>2</sup>*

*“The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization. The fully developed bureaucratic mechanism compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production.” Weber<sup>3</sup>*

*“We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm.” Orwell*

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) has challenged many assumptions regarding the use of the U.S. Army in supporting national political objectives. Failures and even successes in the employment and use of the force in OIF have led to manifold questions regarding the efficacy

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<sup>2</sup> Clausewitz, Carl von, On War, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1993, p. 581.

<sup>3</sup> Gerth, H. H. and C. Wright Mills, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1946, p. 214.



and sustainability of presidential doctrines, U.S. strategy, and the design and use of the U.S. Army in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 international security environment.

Unexpected changes to the international security environment, the rise of previously contained organizations with new dexterities, and an unusual amalgam of political and military objectives in strategy all intersected in Iraq in early 2003. This intersection resulted in the U.S. Army conducting simultaneous full-spectrum operations in the truest sense of the concept: stability, support, reconstruction, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, high-intensity combat, and low-intensity combat (to name a few) were no longer neatly separated bands of the spectrum of combat. Instead, these bands were fused into a beam as the U.S. Army, in order to achieve organizational success in OIF, had to conduct each, usually simultaneously, in the effort to successfully accomplish the missions dictated by strategy and by circumstance.

Adapting to the challenges posed by OIF was an unparalleled endeavor for the U.S. Army. As Stephen Cimbala argues, “the American way of war has traditionally assumed, as did Clausewitz that armed forces tasked by responsible governments are given missions that are clearly set apart from political and social variables. The contamination of military operations by nonmilitary aspects of conflict drives generals and admirals to despair and confounds the Clausewitzian universe of force and policy. Today, more than ever, the ‘exception’ of specialized and politicized military operations is becoming the norm for U.S. and other armed forces. But this ‘renorming’ of expectations about depoliticized war flies in the face of military service traditions. The U.S. Army’s military staff culture, for example, is still dominated by the branch cultures of infantry, armor, and artillery and, therefore, by the conventional military—

Clausewitzian perspective on the separation of politics and operations.”<sup>4</sup> As an organization, to achieve the combat and non-combat (or military and political) objectives requisite to success in OIF, the U.S. Army has had to make significant changes to its entire institution: conceptually, structurally, and cognitively. In addition, the Army has had to accomplish this while in competition with an insurgent organization remarkably dissimilar in structure and capability but significantly more adept at making adjustments in response to a rapidly changing environment.

Although, in comparison to the U.S. Army, the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan are poorly resourced and far less lethal, they have been successful in stymieing the realization of U.S. political, strategic, and military goals in both these countries, and have thus been successful in the accomplishment of many of their organizational objectives and sub-objectives. OIF is therefore not significantly different than Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) and other complex contingencies facing states in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. OEF, like OIF, also challenges the U.S. Army to fuse the spectrum of conflict into a beam to achieve organizational success while defeating a competitive and networked enemy, albeit under different circumstances and in operations reduced in scope and scale. Moreover, both operations require mutual adaptation by competing organizations where the organization that can more rapidly adapt (by adjusting organizational inputs and outputs) achieves levels of organizational success greater than that of the slower organization. If U.S. strategy continues to require the U.S. Army to maintain an ability to support national objectives pertaining to international stability (combining military, political, and social skills) in environments where highly adaptive and networked foes operate *and* in environments where traditional foes might exert their will, the U.S. Army will have to

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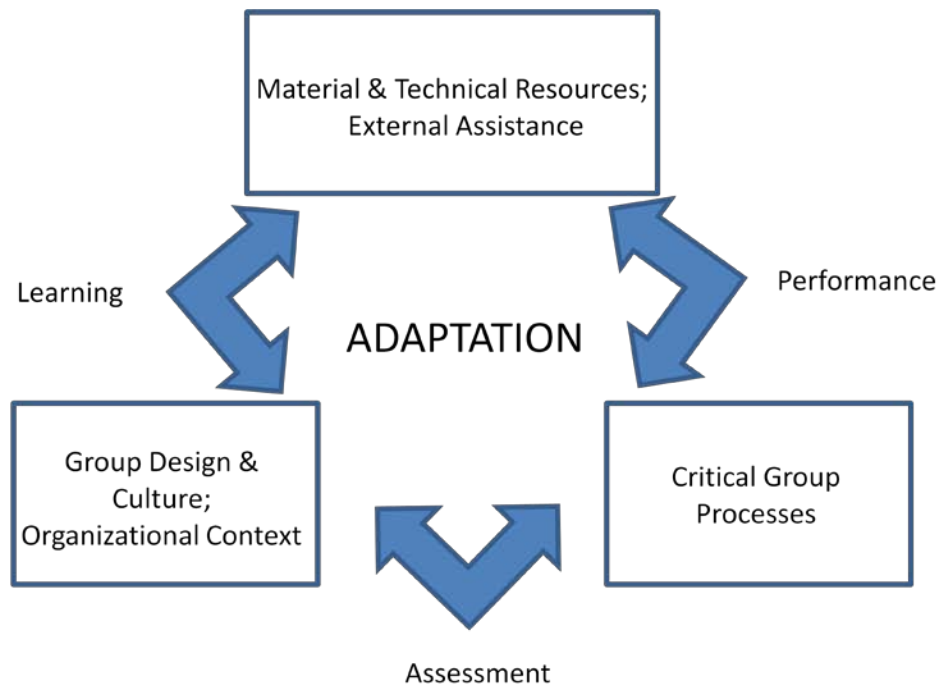
<sup>4</sup> Cimbala, Stephen J., *The Politics of Warfare: The Great Powers in the Twentieth Century*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 1997, p. 123.

maintain an ability to adapt to a highly diverse and a sometimes fused mission set. Designing, resourcing, training, and educating a force capable of fighting and winning in combat but incapable of translating this victory into political and strategic success will not suffice.

The ability of the U.S. Army to adapt to changing environments while slowing the adaptive capacity of real and potential foes is paramount to achieving organizational success as it supports the prosecution of strategy and the achievement of national objectives in the post-Cold War, post-9-11 world. This study will illuminate this process and offer recommendations as to how the U.S. Army can enhance its capacity for adaptation as it moves forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **1.2 HYPOTHESIS**

When two organizations, sharing the same environment but unequal resources, adapt to one another, the organization that can adapt faster will achieve levels of organizational success greater than those of the slower organization (this is the state of disharmony). When these two organizations adapt at the same or nearly the same speed (harmony), the organization that has greater resources, and uses these resources to promote adaptation, will achieve levels of organizational success greater than those of the less-resourced organization. The Cycle of Mutual Adaptation analyzed in this research favors the organization that adapts faster, despite levels of resources, and thus the organization that remains pro-active rather than reactive.



If two organizations' Cycles of Adaptation are out of phase (one is proceeding faster than the other) then the Cycle can be considered in disharmony and the organization that is faster in adapting will achieve greater levels of organizational success. If two organizations' Cycles of Adaptation are in phase (they are proceeding at the same or nearly the same pace) then the organization that is better resourced will achieve greater organizational success.

**Figure 1.** Adaptation Cycle

### 1.3 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do antecedent conditions and structural persistence affect organizational adaptation in the reactive sequence (OIF)?
- How do opposing and competitive tactical organizations (the U.S. Army and the Iraqi insurgency) adapt to each other in Iraq?
- To what extent does the reactive sequence affect the legacy of the organization?

- How do hierarchies and networks adapt and how do they adapt to each other in a competitive environment?

### **1.3.1 Supporting Research Questions**

- How did the Antecedent Conditions of the post-Cold War international security environment and the interpretation of this environment shape potential adaptation in the U.S. Army?
- To what extent did the attacks of 11 September 2001 affect potential adaptation in the U.S. Army?
- To what extent did OEF affect potential adaptation in the U.S. Army?
- To what extent did structures of organizational legacy affect potential adaptation in the U.S. Army?
- To what extent and how does Organizational Context and Group Design & Culture affect organizational adaptation in Iraq?
- To what extent and how do Operational Material & Technical Resources and External Assistance affect organizational adaptation in Iraq?
- To what extent and how do Organizational Group Processes affect organizational adaptation in Iraq?
- To what extent and how does Organizational Learning occur in Iraq?
- How has the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation changed in Iraq since the invasion?
- How can the speed at which the U.S. Army adapts be increased most effectively?
- How can the speed at which the insurgency adapts be decreased most effectively?

- What is the role of organizational adaptation in the future international security environment and to what degree will legacy structures persist?

## **1.4 METHODOLOGY**

This study explores the phenomenon of mutual organizational adaptation (in Iraq) by analyzing a single-case study (Cycle of Mutual Adaptation) nested within a path dependence model.<sup>5</sup>

### **1.4.1 Case Study**

Although there are benefits to using a multiple-case study design (comparison, greater yield of observations, independent variable variation, greater generalizability, etc.), “the single-case design is eminently justifiable under certain conditions—when the case represents (a) critical test of existing theory, (b) a rare or unique circumstance, or (c), a representative or typical case or when the case serves a (d) revelatory or (e) longitudinal purpose.”<sup>6</sup> The Iraq case fulfills all of the aforementioned conditions: (a) it not only tests current organizational theories, it also

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<sup>5</sup> Steven Metz argues that “the Iraq experience is instructive if counterinsurgency operations become a major or the major facet of U.S. Army operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” See, Metz, Steven, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2007, pp. 90-91. Recent projections by the Department of Defense indicate that the conduct of counterinsurgency will at a minimum be a major facet of U.S. operations for the near term.

<sup>6</sup> Yin, Robert K., *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, p. 46.

compliments the literature by adding another case where significant, rapid organizational adaptation occurs; (b) it is unique because of the speed at which organizational adaption occurs; (c) it is representative of modern combat environments and particularly of complex insurgencies/counterinsurgencies where technology intersects with networked and hierarchical organizational forms; (d) it reveals the process and Cycle of Mutual Adaptation and; (e) it examines this cycle over time (from 2003 through mid-2008). Although only one case is being explored in this analysis, this type of “no-variance research design can be quite useful in theory development and testing using multiple observations from a single case.”<sup>7</sup>

This research also qualifies as an *instrumental case study* where “a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue...the case [Iraq] is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else.”<sup>8</sup> The ebb and flow of the ongoing adaptation in Iraq helps to illuminate the process of mutual adaptation where variables are myriad and difficult to isolate and where the data that is forthcoming is captured through “personalistic observation.”<sup>9</sup> Even though this research only focuses on one case, and the context of events and decisions preceding this case, the number of observations contained herein is high. These observations elucidate the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation and will aid in answering the central research questions (and supporting questions) forming the core of this study.

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<sup>7</sup> George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2005, pp. 32-33.

<sup>8</sup> Stake, Robert E., “Case Studies,” *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Eds. Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, Ca, 1994.

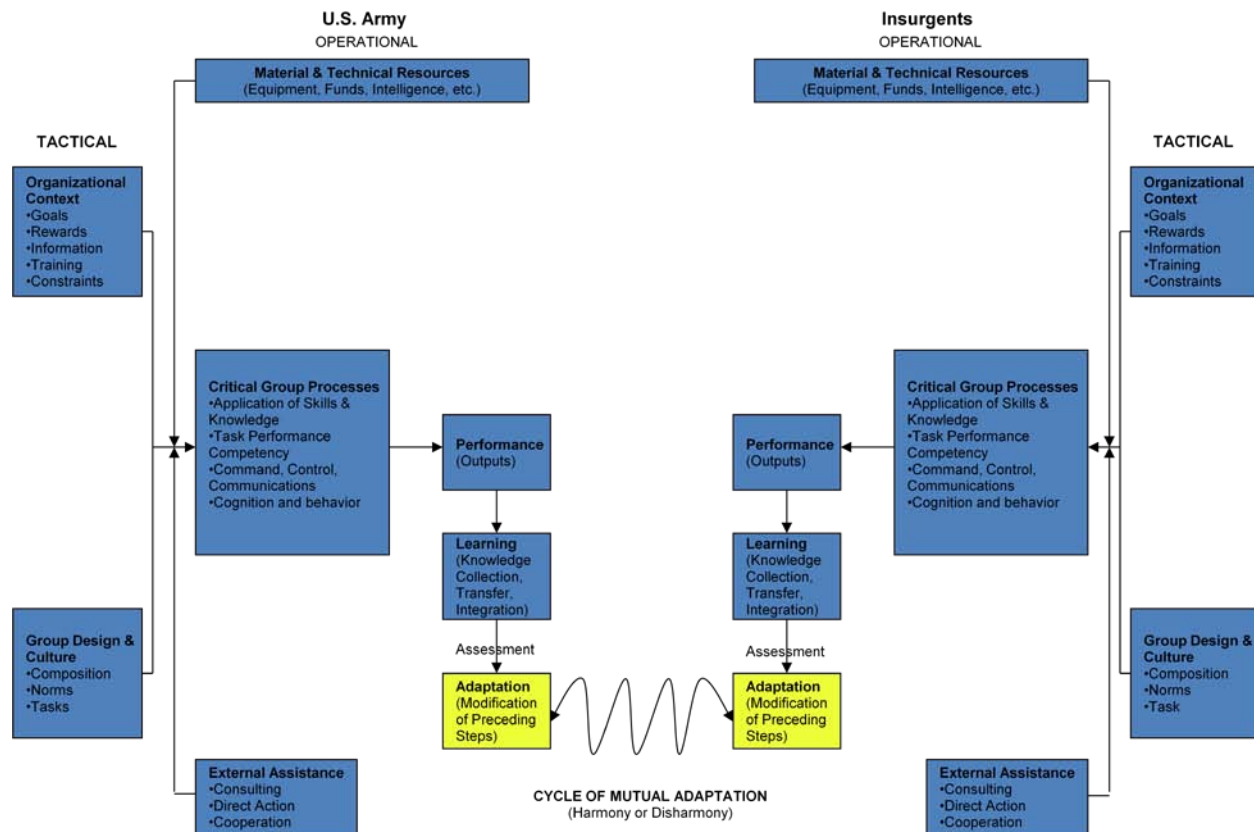
<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 24.

The key to understanding the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation is effectively to investigate and demonstrate the process by which this phenomenon occurs. This case study will use a form of *process tracing* to achieve this goal. Process tracing, as conceived by George and McKeown, is the systematic connection of data points to “enable the investigator to identify the reasons for the emergence of a particular decision through the dynamic of events.”<sup>10</sup> Utilizing process tracing in a case study format, nested in a path dependence model (gathering data points to contextualize the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation), ensures that the conclusions drawn from this research are holistic and grounded in decisions made throughout the dynamic events preceding and during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

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<sup>10</sup> Brady, Henry E. and David Collier, *Rethinking Social Inquiry*, Rowman & Littlefield, Boulder, CO, 1994, p. 173-174.



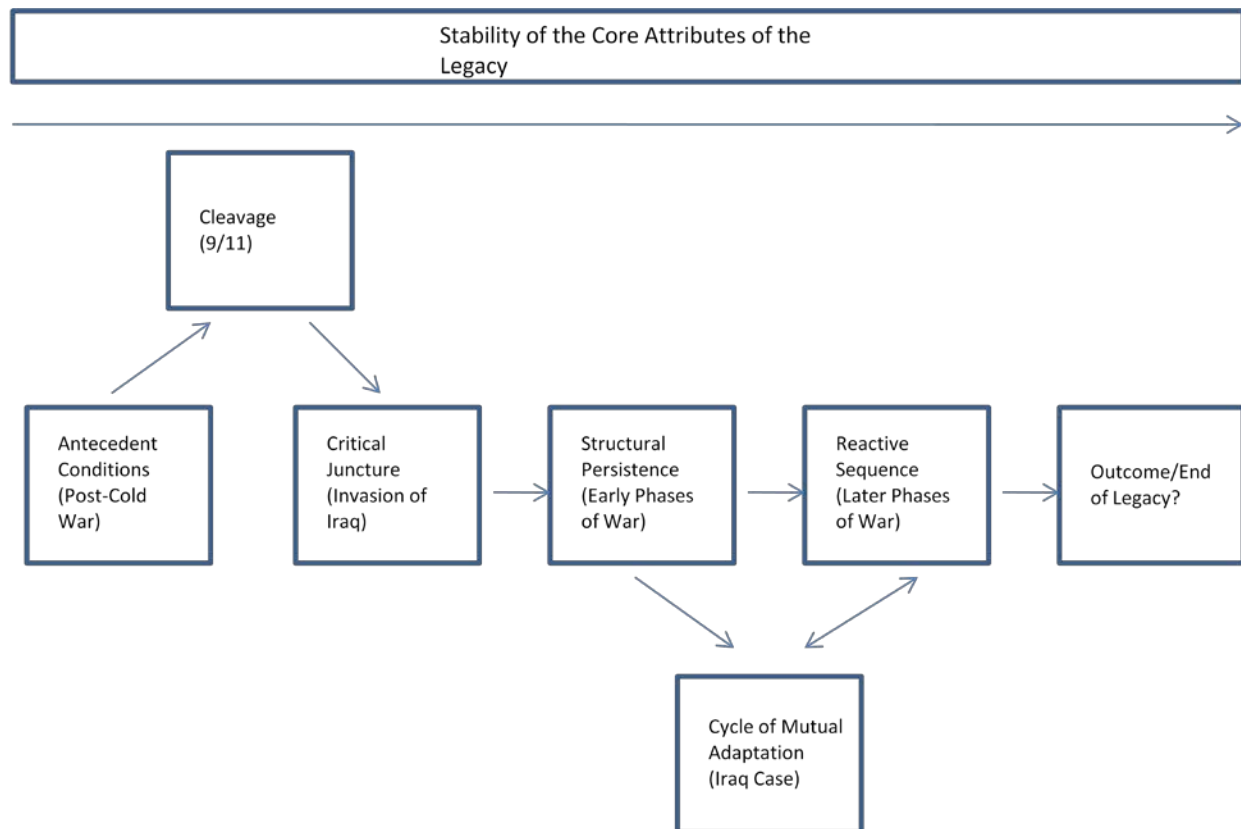


Action Model for Group Task Performance (Adapted from Harrison, Mark I., *Diagnosing Organizations: Methods, Models, and Processes*, Third Edition, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2005. P. 62).

Figure 2. The Cycle of Mutual Adaptation<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> This process is described in further detail in Chapter 2. The cycle consists of a competition between two organizations operating in the same environment (in this case, tactical units of the U.S. Army (brigade and below) and the Iraqi insurgency) and includes the following elements: Organizational Context; Group Design & Culture; Material & Technical Resources; External Assistance; Critical Group Processes; Performance; Learning and; Adaptation. In an academic sense, each competitor (and the decisions it makes regarding how to adapt) acts as an independent variable affecting the decision-making of its counterpart. This back-and-forth between independent variables is critical to formalizing, understanding, and elucidating the process of mutual adaptation. Equally, understanding this interaction is important for deciphering the effects of organizational design, methods of learning, and decision making on each competitor's adaptive process and success in achieving organizational goals. Although it is enormously difficult if not impossible to link actions with reactions among competitors conclusively and for

### 1.4.2 Path Dependence Model



Adapted From: Mahoney, James, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2001. Also, Collier, Ruth Berins and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana, 2002.

**Figure 3.** Path Dependence Model

fully articulating the impetus behind individual decisions made, demonstrating the process by which this occurs can illuminate how the cycle works and indicate the salience of inputs and outputs to this interaction.

In this analysis, a path dependence model is used to frame the context within which the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation occurs. “Path dependence refers to a specific type of explanation that unfolds through a series of logically sequential stages. With this formulation, antecedent historical conditions define a range of options available to actors during a key choice point. This key actor choice point, or what can be called a ‘critical juncture,’ is characterized by the selection of a particular option (e.g., a specific policy, coalition, or government) from among two or more alternatives. The selection made during a critical juncture is consequential because it leads to the creation of institutional or structural patterns that endure over time. In turn, institutional and structural persistence triggers a reactive sequence in which actors respond to prevailing arrangements through a series of predictable responses and counterresponses. These reactions then channel development up to the point of a final outcome, which represents a resolution to the conflicts marking reactive sequences.”<sup>12</sup>

Path dependence constrains the analysis by demonstrating how historical decisions (i.e., the selection of force structure, development of strategy, decisions to employ military force, etc.) limit the range of options for organizational adaptation (in the U.S. Army) as time and circumstance progress and evolve. Collier and Collier describe the persistence of these decisions as a ‘legacy’ that endures in and through future policies and decisions.<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, this legacy recurs and manifests in future policies, decisions, and within the organization affected by these policies and decisions. Simply put, decisions made that affect an

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<sup>12</sup> Mahoney, James, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2001, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Collier, Ruth Berins and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana, 2002, pp. 30-31.

organization are difficult to reverse or change. Thus, for organizations like the U.S. Army, history does matter and has a significant effect on how the organization adapts to changing environmental stimuli and to other organizations. As Page argues, “path dependence requires a build-up of behavioral routines, social connections, or cognitive structures around an institution.”<sup>14</sup> The institution analyzed in this model is the U.S. Army.

### **1.4.3 Unit(s) of Analysis; Unit(s) of Observation<sup>15</sup>**

The units of analysis in this research are the tactical-level organizations of the U.S. Army (Brigade, Battalion, Company, Platoon, Squad, Section, and Team, with particular emphasis on the Company level as the locus of significant tactical action and adaptation) and the Iraqi insurgency.<sup>16</sup> The units of observation are the individuals that comprise these organizations. Lee defines a researcher’s Unit of Analysis as “the phenomenon under study.”<sup>17</sup> In this analysis, the interaction between the Units of Analysis (forming the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation) is the phenomenon under study. The context, setting, and frame of reference for the Units of

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<sup>14</sup> Page, Scott E., “Path Dependence,” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2006, p. 89.

<sup>15</sup> This research is limited to the U.S. Army and to the broader Iraqi insurgency. Except where noted, other individual organizations (i.e., the Mahdi Army and the U.S. Marine Corps) are not examined in depth.

<sup>16</sup> This analysis reflects the fact that “most units focused not on the national insurgent network but on those elements active in their AOR.” Wright, Donald P. and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II, Transition to the New Campaign: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom May 2003—January 2005*, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008, p. 115.

<sup>17</sup> Lee, Thomas W., *Using Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, Ca, 1999, p. 59.

Observation are essential to understanding how the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation proceeds. Examining these characteristics is also requisite to developing conclusions that will assist policymakers, academics, and students of organizational adaptation in better understanding the iterative succession of action and reaction in these cycles and in shaping pro-active policies that circumvent or shorten this repetitive back-and-forth cycle.

#### **1.4.4 Data Collection and Analysis**

The primary sources of empirical evidence for this analysis are derived from strategy documents, doctrine, congressional testimony, organizational/unit review documents, and interviews with participants in OIF. This analysis also takes advantage of manifold secondary sources of information provided by OIF participants and scholars that variously examine organizational adaptation, insurgency, and the U.S. Army.

This research is supported by over 40 interviews and directed conversations on the subject of organizational adaptation in Iraq. The interviews conducted for this analysis were semi-structured so as to allow for further exploration of experiences and discussion that elaborate and clarify the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation.<sup>18</sup> The semi-structured interview allows the

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<sup>18</sup> See Appendix C, Semi-Structured Interview Questions. These questions formed the basis of the interviews conducted with soldiers deployed throughout OIF. Many of these interviews were conducted in confidence so as to conceal the identity of the soldier being interviewed. This allowed for more open and critical remarks than may have been otherwise attained. It should be noted that collecting data on the insurgency is significantly difficult: illicit organizations do not readily share information, conduct few interviews, do not easily divulge information on their members or structures, and most government information about these organizations is

researcher greater flexibility in data collection, is adaptable, and “is capable of being used with all kinds of respondents in many kinds of research, and is uniquely suited to exploration in depth.”<sup>19</sup> The data points of importance to this research (those that substantiate the central research question and supporting questions in this study, inform process tracing, and reveal the sub-parts of the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation) formed the core of the semi-structured interview questions. The responses to these interview questions, were of course, left open.<sup>20</sup>

## **1.5 EXPLANATION OF THE CHAPTERS**

Chapter 2 (Organizational Adaptation) examines the process of organizational adaptation in general and specifically addresses adaptation in hierarchical and networked organizations. The capacity for adaptation is fundamental to an organization’s ability to respond to changing environmental stimuli and is also instrumental to the process of realigning organizational inputs and outputs for the achievement of organizational goals.

Chapter 3 (Antecedent Conditions: Constraining Organizational Adaptation after the Cold War) examines changes in the international security environment in the post-Cold War period and the effect of these changes on U.S. Army policy and the organization’s ability to adapt. Reducing

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classified. See Ressler, Steve, “Social Network Analysis as an Approach to Combat Terrorism: Past, Present and Future Research,” Homeland Security Affairs, Volume II, Number 2, July 2006, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Kerlinger, Fred N., Foundations of Behavioral Research, Hold, Reinhart and Winston Inc., New York, 1973, p. 487.

<sup>20</sup> Flick, Uwe, An Introduction to Qualitative Research, Sage, London, 2002.

the size of the force combined with the U.S. Army's cultural and doctrinal penchant for high-intensity conflict significantly reduced the organization's ability to adapt to emerging threats in the post-Cold War world at a time when strategy required closer and more frequent interaction with these emerging threats.

Chapter 4 (Cleavage and Critical Juncture: Setting the Conditions and Potential for Adaptation in Iraq) charts the decisions made following the attacks of 9/11, the emergence of the Bush Doctrine, the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan and how these decisions, when combined with the U.S. Army's Transformation<sup>21</sup> program, created a highly capable combat force that was equally unprepared for stability operations and the full execution of the tenets of the Bush Doctrine.

Chapter 5 (Structural Persistence: the Invasion of Iraq and Compelled Adaptation) takes a look at the persistence of previous decisions affecting the employment of the U.S. Army and how the use of transition models adopted from a previous era exposed the weakness of the force in achieving organizational objectives at the end of major combat operations in Iraq. The assumptions of what the role the U.S. Army would play in Iraq and the emergence of a complex insurgency compounded the difficulties facing the organization as it entered the stability phases of the operation.

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<sup>21</sup> Any references to the Defense or Army Transformation program, abbreviated as Transformation, will be capitalized so as to distinguish references to this program.

Chapters 6 and 7 (Reactive Sequence: U.S. Army Adaptation and; Reactive Sequence: Insurgent Adaptation) examine the process of organizational adaptation for both the U.S. Army and the insurgency in Iraq and expose the differences and similarities between these groups as they try to achieve organizational objectives in a shared but competitive environment.

Chapter 8 (The Cycle of Mutual Adaptation and the Stability of the Legacy) discusses how these organizations mutually adapt to one another in a shared, competitive environment; the strengths and weaknesses of each organization as they try to modify inputs and outputs to achieve organizational success; how an understanding of this process illuminates past, present, and future cases given past, present, and projected strategies in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 international security environment and; how the legacy of past decisions (despite events and lessons from Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere that have challenged the assumptions underlying these decisions) still reverberate and affect current, and likely future, decisions regarding the U.S. Army's ability to adapt.

Chapter 9 (Implications and Conclusion) outlines the implications of this study, suggests changes in policy based on this research, and poses subjects for future research that will aid current and future policymakers' understanding of the process of mutual adaptation and the fusion of U.S. Army missions in the post-9/11 international security environment.



## 2.0 ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION

*“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.”*—Winston Churchill

As organizations, the U.S. Army<sup>22</sup> and the insurgency<sup>23</sup> in Iraq adapt as events, circumstances, and organizational missions change and evolve. For any organization to remain an on-going concern and achieve mission success, it must adapt to some degree; sometimes radical and total adaptation is required while at other times incremental adaptation will suffice. The amount of adaptation required varies according to changes in the environment, the effects of these changes on organizational capabilities (particularly in relation to goal and mission accomplishment), and the degree to which the organization is out of phase at the start of the adaptation process.

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<sup>22</sup> Certainly, and particularly, the U.S. Marine Corps contributed to the adaptation of the U.S. military as a whole and had influence on U.S. Army adaptations (for instance, in the development of doctrine and joint doctrine). In order to provide focus, this paper will only examine the U.S. Army’s adaptation, particularly at the tactical level and will exclude explicit references to other peer and allied organizations.

<sup>23</sup> The insurgency in Iraq will be treated singularly for the purposes of this paper. Although the differences in insurgent organizations (temporal, ideological, origin, etc.) are significant for many reasons, this paper will not stress those differences in its analysis. Instead, this paper will examine characteristics common to many if not all insurgent organizations in Iraq acting as networks and resisting the Iraqi government and the U.S. Army in its efforts to support this government. For instance, an organization like the Mahdi Army (Mahdi Militia, Jaish al Mahdi (JAM)), will not be addressed specifically despite its influence on the conflict in Iraq.

Without adaptation organizations can wither, lose relevance, or cease to exist because they are no longer capable of accomplishing their assigned goals.

Throughout its history the U.S. Army shielded itself from making significant and revolutionary change, sometimes consciously and at other times reflexively. Codified rules, norms, dogma, culture, and tendency have all contributed as buffers to radical change.<sup>24</sup> In this sense, the U.S. Army is not so different from other large organizations: “Many organizations encounter great problems in dealing with the wider world, because they do not recognize how they are a part of their environment. They see themselves as discrete entities that are faced with the problem of surviving against the vagaries of the outside world, which is often constructed as a domain of threat and opportunity...this kind of egocentrism leads organizations to become preoccupied and to overemphasize the importance of themselves, while underplaying the significance of the wider system of relations in which they exist.”<sup>25</sup> Adaptation in the U.S.

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<sup>24</sup> Some of the impediments to organizational adaptation that the U.S. Army faces are designed and structural: 1) Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power to raise and support armies; 2) Article 2, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution designates the President as commander in chief of the armed forces; and 3) the War Powers Act of 1973 gives Congress the power to declare war. Additionally, Congress oversees the actions and programs of the U.S. Army and approves spending for the Army’s budget. These controls were established in part to ensure civilian control over the military. Consequently, the U.S. Army plays a much smaller role in shaping policy than it might otherwise. The U.S. Army is also constrained by acts of Congress and broad doctrinal evolution and modifications. The National Security Act of 1947, various joint doctrinal publications, and the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (for example) all partially constrain the U.S. Army by ensuring some level of ‘jointness’ in operational planning and budgeting. Thus, the U.S. Army’s inherent flexibility is reduced by a significant number of codified restraints on the organizations’ range of options when choosing how to adapt to its environment and to potential and real adversaries.

<sup>25</sup> Morgan, Gareth, *Images of Organizations*, Sage, Beverly Hills, CA, 1986, p. 243.

Army is only made grudgingly, tends to be ephemeral, and usually falls within prescribed norms favored by the organization as a whole. When significant adaptation occurs, the U.S. Army takes steps to mitigate its effects by binding the radical elements of change to more accepted and orthodox elements of the organization. The tendency to ‘return’ to a state of normalcy and ‘balance’ after a period of adaptation is overwhelming. Bureaucratic inertia and organizational dynamics serve to mute and suppress significant or threatening change.

The long term effect of these organizational attributes (particularly after the end of the Cold War) led the U.S. Army into a precarious balancing act of its own design where increasingly irregular roles were poised against the central task of war-fighting.<sup>26</sup> This did not pose too significant a problem until post-9/11 strategy elevated and conflated the role of the irregular with the regular and fused these formerly antipodal tasks into a single encompassing mission. In the past the U.S. Army could be content and successful in mission accomplishment with short-term adjustments and adaptations: contingencies were not so important as to require comprehensive change and the central mission of the U.S. Army, war-fighting, was not threatened. In contemporary warfare (if warfare is the appropriate term) rapid and regular adaptation is the norm. This style of conflict favors the quickly adapting networked organization and disfavors the more sclerotic hierarchical organization. As Klitgaard argues, “organizations designed to implement a particular set of activities often have trouble addressing contingencies

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<sup>26</sup> Johnson, Wray R, “Warriors without a War: Defending OOTW,” *Military Review*, December 1998-February, 1999.

outside the norm.”<sup>27</sup> Whether rejected or embraced, irregular conflict is now a central component of fighting and winning our nation’s wars and is now more the norm than the outlier.

In comparison to the U.S. Army an insurgency, as an organization, is an almost perfect contradiction. Modern insurgencies rarely operate as vertically integrated hierarchies, have little if any organizational tradition, quickly recognize and respond to changes in the operational environment, and must adapt constantly to maintain relevance and in some cases, merely exist. Adaptations are not permanent but form part of a corpus of experiential and tacit knowledge that informs future organizational change. Few if any rules govern the insurgency’s actions or limit its ability to rapidly adapt.

As this paper will demonstrate, the insurgency in Iraq is a loose confederation of groups, organizations, and individuals with competing (and cooperating) agendas.<sup>28</sup> The diverse nature of the insurgency contributes to its ability to adapt to changes in the environment and to the actions of the U.S. Army. The rather monolithic and hide-bound nature of the U.S. Army retards adaptation to changes in the environment and to the actions of the insurgency. Thus, the cycle of adaptation that occurs between these two organizations is likely to be out of synch: inherently, the insurgency has the capacity to adapt more rapidly than the U.S. Army.

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<sup>27</sup> Klitgaard, Robert, *High-Performance Government*, Pardee RAND Graduate School, Santa Monica, CA, 2005, P. 114.

<sup>28</sup> See Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, pp. 170-176, Record, Jeffrey, *Why Insurgencies Win*, Potomac Books, Washington DC, 2007, White, Jeffrey, “An Adaptive Insurgency: Confronting Adversary Networks in Iraq,” *Policy Focus* #58, September, 2006, and International Crisis Group, “In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency,” *Middle East Report* No. 50, 15 February 2006, pp. 1-3.

This is a significant problem. Traditional methods of organizational learning, analysis, and change simply do not occur rapidly enough to enable counters to insurgent adaptations. This is most true for doctrinal and home-station training adaptations. Significant changes to the norm require levels of analysis and examination by the institutional Army prior to being broadly implemented. Risk aversion and broad attempts to homogenize lessons learned significantly slows institutional adaptation. The effect of this slowdown cascades through organizational levels and is eventually exposed in more deliberate and less innovative cycles of tactical learning and adaptation.

Compounding these problems are the lexicon and methods used and applied in analyzing the insurgency. The informality and networked structure of the insurgency creates an inherent resistance to classification and subdues the efficacy of applying conventional terminology to the organization. Strategies, tactics, and methods of analysis developed for formalized and hierarchical organizations are insufficient for fighting or understanding the dynamic and amorphous nature of the networked insurgent organization.<sup>29</sup>

This chapter will examine the structural capacity for organizational adaptation and the process of organizational adaptation for networked and hierarchical organizations alike. Hierarchies and networks are examined in general because these two organizational varieties typify two of the organizations competing in OIF: the U.S. Army and the Iraqi insurgency,

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<sup>29</sup> Steve Metz argues that certain traditional terms of reference do not apply to insurgencies. Although the concept of a center of gravity makes sense when examining a hierarchical organization, it has far less relevance for networked organizations where there may be no center of gravity or multiple centers of gravity. Metz, Steven, Personal Interview, 6 November 2008.

respectively. The strengths and weaknesses of each type of organization will be reviewed and the process of adaptation (examined in context in chapters 6 and 7) will be detailed.

## **2.1     STRUCTURAL CAPACITY AND NEED FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION**

Both hierarchies' and networks' capacity for adaptation is structurally limited. Hierarchies and large organizations (particularly governmental organizations like the U.S. Army) are loathe to change, subject to inertial forces, and ill-suited for rapid response to environmental stimuli. Networks, which tend to be small and organized for short-term goal accomplishment of limited scope, maintain few structures that contribute to inertial forces, and change frequently based on environmental stimuli. But networks, particularly illicit networks like the insurgency in Iraq, are structurally limited in their effect and durability over the long term. Size, capacity for action, an inability to coordinate sub-group action and behavior for common objectives, and the need to remain mostly anonymous significantly restrict the capabilities of an illicit network. Thus, a tradeoff exists between structure and capacity.

The U.S. Army's capacity for adaptation is impeded by a number of bureaucratic faults that plague large, hierarchical organizations. Defensive routines employed by large organizations hide errors made by the organization and complicate the adaptive process.<sup>30</sup> Methods employed for maintaining strict organizational control (to include the chain of

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<sup>30</sup> See Argyris, Chris, *Strategy, Change, and Defensive Routines*, Pitman, Boston, 1985 and Argyris, Chris, *Overcoming Organizational Defenses*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1990.

command, the orders process, an almost complete submission to authority, and management techniques that suppress subordinate innovation) also limit opportunities for adaptation.<sup>31</sup> The embedded, inflexible culture and rigid standard operating procedures common to the U.S. Army reduce the prospects of realizing considerable organizational gains through change.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, “most militaries (ours included) prepare for the last war they fought, especially victories. Peacetime rarely sees much innovative action, though some good thinking can come up between wars. When we again fight, we have to be able to pull off Sir Michael Howard’s idea of getting things right quickly, or at least faster than our adversary.”<sup>33</sup> These attributes are particularly pernicious in the current international security environment: “large, conservative, bureaucratic organizations can be highly successful in stable environments, but in turbulent and unpredictable environments, they do not learn or change fast enough.”<sup>34</sup> The U.S. Army,

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<sup>31</sup> Argyris, Chris, “Initiating Change that Perseveres,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, Volume 40, Number 3, 1997. See also, Nirenberg, John, *The Living Organization: Transforming Teams into Workplace Communities*, Pfeiffer & Co., Homewood, IL, 1993 and Milgram, Stanley, *Obedience to Authority*, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1974.

<sup>32</sup> Argyris Chris, *Reasoning, Learning, and Action*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1982. See also, Deevy, Edward, *Creating the Resilient Organization*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1995, Nystrom, Paul C. and William H. Starbuck, “To Avoid Organizational Crises, Unlearn,” *Organization Dynamics*, Volume 12, Number 4, 1984 and, Meyer, Marshall W., *Environments and Organizations*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1978.

<sup>33</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, E-mail Interview, 13 September 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Carroll John S., Jenny W. Rudolph, and Sachi Hatakenaka, “Learning from Organizational Experience,” *The Blackwell Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management*, Eds., Easterby-Smith, Mark and Marjorie A. Lyles, Malden, MA, 2003.

because of its organizational design is often the “victim of change rather than an agent of change.”<sup>35</sup>

Networks on the other hand adapt quickly but lack the organizational and analytical girth to comprehensively estimate environmental changes and assess the effects of these changes on the network and on organizational effectiveness (data collection and analysis elements are not explicitly designated in this type of organization). Although sensitive to changes in the environment because of heightened risk awareness and an inherent survival instinct that affects individuals and organizations, networks do not maintain the structural capacity for significant analysis, rigorous testing of competing hypotheses, or controlling the adaptation process. While this might present as a strength when the organization makes a rapid adaptation to change, the adaptation made might not have been the best available out of a range of possible options in support of organizational goals. Only if the changes made enhance organizational effectiveness in accomplishing the organization’s mission are they of any value. Adaptation for the sake of adaptation, even or especially if for organizational survival, is not necessarily impressive or significant in and of itself.

The size of an organization is not necessarily a determinant of an ability to learn or to adapt. Networks are often credited with a structural ability to learn and adapt quickly because of the organization’s size (i.e., less time is required to transfer knowledge and lessons to fewer members) and intimacy (bonds tend to be stronger in networks, particularly illicit networks like an insurgency). But Brown and Luguid argue that “large, atypical, enacting organizations have

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<sup>35</sup> Dearth, Douglas H., “Operationalizing Information Operations: C2W...RIP,” *Cyberwar 3.0: Human Factors in Information Operations and Future Conflict*, Eds. Campen, Alan D. and Douglas H. Dearth, AFCEA International Press, Fairfax, VA, 2000.



the potential to be highly innovative and adaptive.”<sup>36</sup> Correspondingly, Huber contends that even large organizations can learn to adapt and innovate if their administrators better understand how organizations learn.<sup>37</sup> However, while an understanding of how organizations learn is necessary to developing an effective process or system for adaptation, it must also be understood that learning and adaptation might be, and usually are, two different processes.<sup>38</sup> An organization can learn but if it fails to correctly implement changes to inputs and outputs in the adaptation cycle, adaptation will not occur.

Organizational learning occurs when action results in an addition to the organization’s knowledge and value base that contributes to an increase in an organization’s problem-solving capability.<sup>39</sup> Organizational adaptation occurs when an action results in procedural and physical adjustments that help an organization better match its inputs and outputs with desired goals and objectives.<sup>40</sup> Comparatively, hierarchies tend to be entrenched, conservative organizations that shun unorthodox learning and adaptation in favor of more traditional and approved methods of top-down change management based on the analysis of lessons within the framework of the

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<sup>36</sup> Brown, John Seely and Paul Duguid, “Organizational Learning and Communities of Practice: Toward a Unified View of Working, Learning, and Innovation,” *Organization Science*, Volume 2, Number 1, February, 1991, pp. 53-54.

<sup>37</sup> Huber, George P., “Organizational Learning,” *Organization Science*, Volume 2, Number 1, 1991.

<sup>38</sup> Fiol, C. Marlene and Marjorie A. Lyles, “Organizational Learning,” *Academy of Management Review*, Volume 10, Number 4, 1985.

<sup>39</sup> Probst, Gilbert J. B. and Bettina S. T. Buchel, *Organizational Learning: The Competitive Advantage of the Future*, Prentice Hall, London, 1997.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. See also, Marquardt, Michael J., *Building the Learning Organization*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1996.

organization as it exists; networks, on the other hand, tend to inculcate various methods of learning and are more receptive to lessons that challenge prevailing concepts of effectiveness. This is at least partly due to the structure of each organization: the larger, hierarchical organization can continue to exist even after repeated failures; the much smaller network might only need to fail once to no longer be a viable entity. Therefore networks tend to not view learning opportunities (when recognized) as challenges to the organization but as occasions to improve organizational efficacy while hierarchies tend to view learning opportunities as mistakes to be avoided.

For the majority of its history, the U.S. Army has viewed challenges to traditional war-fighting competencies (such as operations other than war (OOTW)) as challenges to the organization's *raison d'être* and not as opportunities to learn and adapt but as irregularities to be dismissed or ignored.<sup>41</sup> Bottom-up learning from episodes in the irregular has not been completely dismissed though. These experiences are captured by the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), at the U.S. Army's training centers and schools, and are informally maintained as tacit knowledge throughout the force. But tactical learning from experience and training has not been a locus of organizational change and adaptation. Organizational change in the U.S.

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<sup>41</sup> Tierney, John J., *Chasing Ghosts: Unconventional Warfare in American History*, Potomac Books, 2006. See also, Beckett, Ian F. W., *Armed Forces & Modern Counterinsurgency*, Croom Helm, London, 1985, Cassidy, Robert M., *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror*, Praeger Security International, London, 2006, and Cassidy, Robert M., "Back to the Streets without Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and other Small Wars," *Parameters*, Summer, 2004.

Army tends to be driven by significant strategic concerns, bureaucratic mandate, or major changes in the international security environment.<sup>42</sup>

The challenges posed by OEF and OIF defy conventional U.S. Army wisdom and have forced the Army to do more than just learn, make footnotes, and plan for the next conflict. These operations and the strategy that guides them mesh strategic concerns and bureaucratic mandates with the reality of the international security environment. What is required is rather certain knowledge of how networked insurgencies adapt, how the U.S. Army adapts, and how these organizations adapt to each other.<sup>43</sup> Clearly, there are no off-the-shelf solutions to this problem and applying lessons from previous and similar conflicts is necessary but not sufficient.<sup>44</sup> Instead, there is an urgent requirement for an emphasis on and understanding of institutional adaptability.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> This is not to suggest that these changes are always the most appropriate or that change always occurs. The U.S. Army's 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division has changed from an Airborne unit, to a Pentomic unit, to an Air Assault unit over the past 60 years. The U.S. Army also maintains the XVIII Airborne Corps without a significant mandate for large airborne insertion operations. Too, the U.S. Army was reduced in strength from 18 divisions to 10 following the end of the Cold War and to date has not significantly increased in size despite a considerable increase in operations tempo.

<sup>43</sup> Brimley, Shawn, "Tentacles of Jihad: Targeting Transnational Support Networks," *Parameters*, Summer, 2006.

<sup>44</sup> Desch, Michael C., *Soldiers in Cities: Military Operations on Urban Terrain*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2001.

<sup>45</sup> Hoffman, Frank G., "Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?," *Parameters*, Summer, 2007.

## **2.2 ELEMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION**

Framing and defining how an organization adapts is fundamental to understanding the phenomenon and to understanding how the phenomenon can be adjusted to favor or disfavor the organization under review. This is even more important when examining how and the rate at which organizations adapt to each other in a competitive environment. The basic framework of this adaptive cycle flows from inputs, to processes, to outputs, to assessment, and finally to adaptation.

### **2.2.1 Group Design & Culture (composition, norms, and tasks)**

Organization and group design is an integral component of any insurgency.<sup>46</sup> Organization and group design is equally important to the U.S. Army, particularly when considering how difficult it is to manage an effective counterinsurgency. Without a coherent and deliberate design for promoting adaptation, an organization might find it impossible to learn and apply lessons to effectively accomplish group tasks and goals. While group design is essential to the effectiveness of any organization and for fostering adaptation, it can also present a number of significant drawbacks that are difficult to detect.

First, an organization, over time, typically manifests some form of hierarchy or leadership structure. In smaller organizations this might not have a particularly noticeable effect

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<sup>46</sup> Singh, Bajit and Ko-Wang Mei, *Theory and Practice of Modern Guerrilla Warfare*, Asia Publishing House, New York, 1971. See also, Valeriano, Napoleon D. and Charles T. R. Bohannon, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations: the Philippine Experience*, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1962.

but in large organizations a hierarchy tends to ensure that freedom of thought, action, and maneuver is progressively proscribed.<sup>47</sup> Second, a designed organization also suffers from “forces holding it in check...sharply circumscribing the capacity of organizations to react to new conditions.”<sup>48</sup> Lastly, any organization with a strong leadership structure tends to develop frames of reference that support instinctive and reflexive reaction without full comprehension of the environmental change that is causing this reaction.<sup>49</sup> Smaller organizations, particularly networks, do not necessarily rely on a hierarchy or centralized leadership for control, tend to be safeguarded from the negative effects of organization design flaws and also tend to develop more open organizational cultures amenable to change and adaptation.

Organizational culture develops over time and shares a symbiotic relationship with organizational design. “Cultures are the repositories of what their members agree about.”<sup>50</sup> Cultures are also the “unique set of organizational and behavioral outcomes of an established work group.”<sup>51</sup> Cultures can be emotionally charged, historically biased, and inherently symbolic and fuzzy, but they can also be dynamic and can be shaped by their environment and by learning.<sup>52</sup> Although culture helps shape how an organization is composed, what it believes,

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<sup>47</sup> Lang, Kurt, “Military Organizations,” *Handbook of Organizations*, Ed. March, James, Rand McNally & Company, Chicago, 1965.

<sup>48</sup> Kaufman, Herbert, *The Limits of Organizational Change*, University of Alabama Press, Alabama, 1971.

<sup>49</sup> Hamel, Gary and C. K. Prahalad, *Competing for the Future*, Harvard Business School, Boston, 1994.

<sup>50</sup> Trice, Harrison M. and Janice M. Beyer, *The Cultures of Work Organizations*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1993, p. 5.

<sup>51</sup> Elsmore, Peter, *Organizational Culture: Organizational Change?*, Gower, Burlington, VT, 2001, p. 193.

<sup>52</sup> Trice and Beyer, *Op Cit*.

its norms, and how it goes about task achievement, culture probably has its greatest effect on how an organization perceives itself and how it conducts its operations.

Individuals in an organization, especially a martial organization, are particularly disposed to the socializing forces of organizational culture.<sup>53</sup> Additionally, culture can either “support or nullify the best network designs” despite the design’s apparent flexibility and inherently adaptive qualities.<sup>54</sup> Many of the choices that an organization makes as it attempts to adapt are either accelerated or impeded by organizational culture.

### **2.2.2 Organizational Context (goals, rewards, information, training, constraints)**

Traditionally (and this is especially true for military organizations), organizational form and effectiveness relies on the redundancy of the individuals in the organization where each person is replaceable by any other individual in the group.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, organizational design implies a modicum of constancy in how the organization conducts operations and achieves goals. A typical organization is designed to accomplish the operations that it is expected to prosecute and not for ones that might appear in a contingency.<sup>56</sup> Training within an organization is tailored to

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<sup>53</sup> Argyris, Chris, *On Organization Learning*, Blackwell Business, Cambridge, MA, 1993 and Huntington, Samuel, *The Soldier and the State*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1957.

<sup>54</sup> Cross, Rob, and Andrew Parker, *The Hidden Power of Social Networks*, Harvard Business School, 2004, p. 127.

<sup>55</sup> Cherns, A., “The Principles of Sociotechnical Design Revisited,” *Human Relations*, Volume 4, Number 3, 1987.

<sup>56</sup> Galbraith, Jay R., “Designing the Innovating Organization,” *Organizational Dynamics*, Volume 10, Winter, 1982.

these operations and therefore, because of its heightened importance in OOTW, training packages and initiatives must underscore and foster the ability to adapt.<sup>57</sup> But in order to achieve any sort of innovation, much less adaptation, organizations must be designed for and must function in a fashion that supports these initiatives. Goals and rewards must be linked to adaptive conduct, bureaucratic constraints must be relaxed, training must fit the circumstances of the mission and environment, and available information must reflect an emphasis on change. Innovation will only be adopted because it promotes an advantage; the adopters' characteristics might affect how this advantage is realized.<sup>58</sup> Redundancy and the ability to replicate are characteristics that must be replaced with innovation and originality in the adaptive organization.

In order for an organization to remain vibrant and capable of adaptation, it must be able to “develop internal processes that provide the means to handle large-scale and discontinuous change.”<sup>59</sup> The Iraqi insurgency has proven to be relatively adept at responding to discontinuous change and has demonstrated this in its alternating choice of targets.<sup>60</sup> A steady procession of targeting changes (from coalition bases, convoys, national police, civilian targets, infrastructure,

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<sup>57</sup> Metz, Steven and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2004.

<sup>58</sup> Rogers, Everett M., *Diffusion of Innovations*, Free Press, New York, 2003, p. 229.

<sup>59</sup> Kiel, Douglas, *Managing Chaos and Complexity in Government*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, p. 39.

<sup>60</sup> Walter Laquer argues that urban insurgents are indiscriminate in their choice of targets and that their targeting choices reflect a desire to create a climate of insecurity. This allows insurgents to be adaptive in not only what they attack but how and when. This type of adaptation significantly reduces the capabilities of the counterinsurgent force (in this case, the U.S. Army) since it forces the observation and protection of various and distant target sets. See Laquer, Walter, *Guerrilla: A Historical and Critical Study*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1976.

etc.) evidences how agile and adaptive a networked insurgent organization is in its ability to adopt tactics and shift its focus from hard to softer targets as circumstance allows or dictates. Conversely, the slower pace of action, reaction, and adaptation demonstrated by the U.S. Army, particularly at the higher echelons, highlights an ongoing resistance or inability to change. These differing levels of change and adaptive acumen are likely the result of organizational design, culture, and context.

### **2.2.3 Material & Technical Resources (equipment, funds, intelligence, operational support) and External Assistance (consulting, direct action, cooperation)**

Resources enable and enhance an organization's ability to conduct missions and to audit its performance both during and after mission completion. This is as true for a hierarchical organization as it is for a networked organization. Ensuring the optimal application and use of resources is essential for mission accomplishment.<sup>61</sup> Equipment can take the form of weaponry, bomb making materials, fuel, or tools for recording and transferring information. Funds can appear in the form of tangible goods or currency depending on how each supports mission requirements. Intelligence is vital to generating insight into the likely unfolding of a mission before it occurs and might be the most important resource provided by operational level sources. Knowledge of the population and social networks as well as accurate and detailed information

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<sup>61</sup> Tomes, Robert R., "Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare," *Parameters*, Spring, 2004.



and support from sources external to the organization helps establish a valid or invalid hierarchy or network.<sup>62</sup>

Consulting occurs when an organization receives information or advice from external organizations that are either from within the organizational hierarchy, an extended network, or from an external agency. Direct action is the assistance that an organization might receive from local supporters, government agencies, or coalition partners (in the case of the U.S. Army), or other insurgent groups (in the case of the insurgency) during the conduct of their missions.<sup>63</sup> Cooperation can include any form of collaboration with partners from within or from outside the organization.

#### **2.2.4 Critical Group Processes (application of skills and knowledge; task performance competency; command, control, and communications; cognition and behavior)**

Each of these processes is instrumental to how an organization accomplishes its goals and is critical to the overall performance of the organization. Collectively, these processes are the fundamental enablers of organizational achievement in cooperative action. A combination of

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<sup>62</sup> Wesensten, Nancy J. et al, "Cognitive Readiness in Network-Centric Operations," Parameters, Spring, 2005. See also, Zeytoonian, Dan, "Intelligent Design: COIN Operations and Intelligence Collection and Analysis," Military Review, September-October 2006, and Hamilton, Donald W., The Art of Insurgency: American Military Policy and the Failure of Strategy in Southeast Asia, Praeger, Westport, CT, 1998.

<sup>63</sup> Austin Long postulates that an insurgency must rely on either active or passive population support for supplies, information, and personnel. This is also important, but to a lesser degree, for the U.S. Army. See, Long, Austin, On Other War: Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2006.

decision-making, communications, control of information, and forms of interaction, understanding, and behavior are all critical to the effective realization of critical group processes. Evaluating and understanding the fundamentals of these critical group processes helps to enable greater comprehension of the effect of organizational inputs and facilitates a refinement of organizational outputs.

One aspect of how organizations conduct collective action is the processing of information transmitted and received during a mission or activity. Processing information quickly and accurately enables an organization to manage uncertainty and to reduce ambiguity as a mission unfolds.<sup>64</sup> How this information is processed is a function of organizational structures. “Transactional structures are both the products and shapers of information flow. Where such flows are stable and recurrent, such structures will metamorphose into institutions.”<sup>65</sup> These institutions form a persistent architecture that shapes how information is sent, received, processed and consequentially, understood.

The interpretation of mission-related information is further shaped by organizational and individual cognition and behavior. Cognition and behavior are important factors in the reception and processing of information. Determining the sources and indicators of cognition and behavior are crucial elements of any program designed to improve overall group processes. As Garvin

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<sup>64</sup> Daft, Richard L. and Robert H. Lengel, “Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness, and Structural Design,” *Management Science*, Volume 32, Number 5, May 1986.

<sup>65</sup> Boisot, Max H., *Information Space*, Routledge, New York, 1995, p. 232.

asserts, changes in cognition and behavior typically precede any improvements in overall performance and are the *sine qua non* of increasing organizational effectiveness.<sup>66</sup>

Another component of collective organizational processes is task performance competency. Increasing task performance competency requires an increase in the speed and frequency of information flows, a flattened organizational structure freed from the strictures associated with layered decision-making, decreased evaluation time on mission success or failure, and increased individual and organizational knowledge transfer. As Khalizad and White argue, “reducing the number of management layers not only speeds up the flow of information from initial acquirer to ultimate user (since it has fewer stops along the way) but can also increase its accuracy (since there are fewer opportunities for distortion, either inadvertent or deliberate).”<sup>67</sup> In addition to increasing the speed and accuracy of information flows, Khalizad and White contend that the U.S. Army, as a component of the U.S. armed forces, must experiment with new methods of conducting operations, perform careful assessments of operations, and be willing to make small and incremental changes to how operations are conducted as new information becomes available.<sup>68</sup> Raising task performance competency requires a process facilitated by smaller and flatter organizational structures, the ability to incorporate new information, and the ability to rapidly respond to changing circumstance

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<sup>66</sup> Garvin, David A., “Building a Learning Organization,” Harvard Business Review, Volume 71, Number 4, 1993.

<sup>67</sup> Khalizad, Zalmay M. and John P. White, The Changing Role of Information in Warfare, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1999.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p. 346.

(characteristics that are being improved by the hierarchical U.S. Army but might already be present in networked insurgent organizations).

Despite the fact that organizational communications networks are now so intricate and interrelated that they form self-organizing complex systems,<sup>69</sup> these systems still require organizational and individual input to be optimally effective and mission-relevant. Part of this input is derived from lessons learned through the trial-and-error application of organizational and individual skills and knowledge. Skills and knowledge, abetted by the aforementioned critical group processes, are the key determinants of group performance. The application of skills and knowledge affects the group's ability to exercise these critical processes but are also a major determinant of how their supporting structures are formed and exercised. Collectively, individual and group skills and knowledge enable and shape all critical group processes; proficiency and competency (or a lack thereof) is reflected in the groups' overall level of task performance.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Monge, Peter R. and Noshir S. Contractor, *Theories of Communications Networks*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003.

<sup>70</sup> Performance is the measure of the outputs of the organization against a level of inputs and challenges. The inputs vital to the performance of both hierarchies and networks (or counterinsurgents and insurgents) include all the aforementioned critical group processes.

### **2.2.5 Learning (knowledge collection, knowledge transfer, knowledge integration)<sup>71</sup>**

Learning is a process of acquiring new information and knowledge either through instruction or experience. Organizational learning typically presents in one of two ways: 1) Single Loop—“instrumental learning that changes strategies of action or assumptions underlying strategies in ways that leave the values of a theory of action unchanged” or; 2) Double Loop—“learning that results in a change in the values of theory-in-use, as well as in its strategies and assumptions” and can even occur within organizations through sub-organization cooperation.<sup>72</sup> The U.S. Army has been, like other large hierarchical organizations, historically prone to employing Single Loop learning: while its actions might change, the underlying assumptions and hypotheses supporting these actions remain intact.<sup>73</sup> Although unproven, this might be true of insurgent organizations as well.

A key component of the organizational learning process is organizational knowledge, which exists within the organization as a whole (unlike individual knowledge) and is increased

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<sup>71</sup> Jackson, et al, makes the point that understanding how organizations learn can enable anticipatory capabilities and create proactive opportunities for analysts and practitioners. See, Jackson, Brian, et al, Case Studies of Organizational Learning in Five Terrorist Groups (Volume II), RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2005.

<sup>72</sup> Argyris, Chris and Donald A. Schon, Organizational Learning II, Addison-Wesley Publishing, Reading, MA, 1996, pp. 20-21. See also, Knudsen, Daniel C., The Transition to Flexibility, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, 1996.

<sup>73</sup> Michael Kenney discusses how the organizations involved in counter-drug actions conducted Single Loop learning and how this type of learning minimized refinements of organizational goals and prevented experimentation with newer or better methods of action. See Kenney, Michael, From Pablo to Osama, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 2007.

through new types of behavior and though experimental practice.<sup>74</sup> An integral element of organizational knowledge is the knowledge gained and possessed by individuals as a result of organizational instruction, experience, or that gleaned from interaction with external organizations. Differences in both knowledge bases and levels can lead to diverse interpretations of events resulting in multiple lessons being learned via the same organizational action.<sup>75</sup> This can have an unexpected effect on organizational learning and can lead to robust changes if captured and incorporated into the organizational dataset via knowledge transfer.

Knowledge transfer is vital to the process of improving the learning capacity of an organization. Knowledge transfer requires that an organization be capable of capturing and diffusing knowledge throughout the organization or at least to interested parties or individuals.<sup>76</sup> While all transfers of knowledge require some degree of effort, structures supporting the transfer of knowledge tend to remove some of the friction associated with knowledge diffusion<sup>77</sup> and are

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<sup>74</sup> Easterby-Smith, et al, *Organizational Learning and the Learning Organization*, Sage, London, 1999.

<sup>75</sup> March, James G., et al, "Learning from Samples of One or Fewer," *Organization Science*, Volume 2, Number 1, February, 1991.

<sup>76</sup> Campbell argues that rapid knowledge transfer, especially from the lower echelons in the form of lessons learned, should become a standard for all of the armed forces. See Campbell, James D., *Making Riflemen from Mud: Restoring the Army's Culture of Irregular Warfare*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2007.

<sup>77</sup> Szulanski, Gabriel and Rossella Cappetta, "Stickiness: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Predicting Difficulties in the Transfer of Knowledge within Organizations," *The Blackwell Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management*, Eds. Easterby-Smith, Mark and Majorie A. Lyles, Blackwell, Malden, MA, 2003.

indispensable to capturing the experience gained through experiment or chance occurrence.<sup>78</sup> But even when these structures are in place some knowledge, particularly tacit knowledge, cannot be “captured, translated or converted, but only displayed, [or] manifested in what we do.”<sup>79</sup>

Michael Kenney discusses two methods for gaining and integrating knowledge: *Metis* and *Techne*. *Metis* encompasses the skills used to adapt to the environment and is largely intuitive (knowledge gained through experience). *Techne* refers to abstract and codified knowledge like that gained through formal instruction. *Metis* and *Techne* are combined for application across a range of activities and reinforce each other by expanding general and specific knowledge for practical exercise. *Metis* and *Techne*, although they are differential knowledge collection and absorption methods, are mutually reinforcing, fungible to a degree, and enhance operational knowledge of specific activities while expanding the pool of skill-based knowledge applicable to a range of activities. Both *Metis* and *Techne* are critical components of individual knowledge collection and transfer, organizational knowledge collection transfer, and organizational adaptation.<sup>80</sup> Thus, experience, in conjunction with knowledge, structures for

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<sup>78</sup> Carley, Kathleen, “Organizational Learning and Personnel Turnover,” *Organization Science*, Volume 3, Number 1, February, 1993. This process has become easier for the insurgency and the counterinsurgency in Iraq because of popular access to the internet and through the availability of recording and display devices like laptop computers, DVDs, cell phones, etc. See, Cronin, Audrey Kurth, *Cyber-Mobilization: The New Levee en Masse*, *Parameters*, Summer, 2006.

<sup>79</sup> Tsoukas, Haridimos, “Do We Really Understand Tacit Knowledge,” *The Blackwell Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management*, Eds. Easterby-Smith, Mark and Marjorie A. Lyles, Blackwell, Malden, MA, 2003, p. 426.

<sup>80</sup> Kenney, Michael, *Op Cit*.

capturing knowledge, transfer capabilities, and integration, form the fundamentals of organizational learning.

In dynamic conditions, such as those that prevail in conflict environments, the timely and accurate transfer of information and knowledge from the individuals and organizations involved in a mission or event is an essential part of maintaining organizational flexibility and adaptability.<sup>81</sup> Increasing flexibility and adaptability, in turn, can lead to an opportunity for organizations, and their members, to be inured to the process of capturing the lessons of a particular event or mission. Adaptive learning is particularly important in the non-linear and complex environment. But, as Max Boisot maintains, adaptation is not just a process of learning but also of unlearning. “Knowledge may be progressive in the sense that successive approximations may give us a better grasp of the underlying structures of reality, but...it is not necessarily cumulative. Subsequent hypotheses cannot always reliably build on preceding ones to create a single monolithic edifice.”<sup>82</sup> For the adaptive organization, the ability to forget the lessons of the past is nearly as important or, perhaps, more important than is learning the lessons of the present.

### **2.2.6 Adaptation**

Organizational adaptation refers to a complex process of learning and change. To be adaptive, an organization must take an action to support a particular organizational goal or mission, assess

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<sup>81</sup> Comfort, Louise, “Self-Organization in Complex Systems,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, Volume 4, Number 3, 1994.

<sup>82</sup> Boisot, Max H., *Knowledge Assets*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998, p. 99.



the performance of this action, and then adjust organizational inputs and outputs to better match the goals or mission of the organization based on this prior assessment.<sup>83</sup> Conversely, a non-adaptive system can be characterized as being “low on technical structure, low on organizational flexibility, and, for the most part, low on cultural openness.”<sup>84</sup> Adaptation at the organizational level is achieved through a series of incremental changes throughout the organization.<sup>85</sup> To be effective, these changes must support the furtherance of the organization’s goals or mission and must be supported by the aforementioned components of the adaptation process.

There are many factors affecting an organization’s ability to adapt. “Adaptive lag” can occur when an organization must make major changes requiring numerous resources and copious amounts of time.<sup>86</sup> Hierarchical organizations tend to make both small and large changes slowly while networked organizations tend to make comprehensive and striking changes rather quickly. This is true for the U.S. Army (especially at the higher echelons) and for the insurgency in Iraq, respectively.<sup>87</sup> In part, this might reflect differences in risk calculation (the insurgents have

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<sup>83</sup> Probst, Gilbert J. B. and Bettina S. T. Buchel, Op Cit. See also, Marquardt, Michael J., Op Cit.

<sup>84</sup> Comfort, Louise, Shared Risk, Pergamon, Amsterdam, 1999, p. 68.

<sup>85</sup> Edmondson, Amy C. and Anita Williams Wooley, “Understanding Outcomes of Organizational Learning Interventions,” The Blackwell Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management, Eds. Easterby-Smith, Mark and Marjorie A. Lyles, Blackwell, Malden, MA, 2003.

<sup>86</sup> Adapting too quickly can cause an organization to incur unnecessary costs in the form of mal-adaptation or adapting to the wrong signals in its external environment. See, Miller, Danny and Peter H. Friesen, Organizations: A Quantum View, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1984, pp. 216-217.

<sup>87</sup> This pattern more closely follows that of interwar innovation where organizations tied change to past experience and assessed experiment. See, Knox, MacGregor and Williamson Murray, The Dynamics of Military Revolution, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001.

fewer inhibitions and structurally imposed constraints),<sup>88</sup> the cost of resources (the U.S. Army has enormously higher costs of operation and change than does the insurgency), or the U.S. Army's tendency, like many large organizations, to focus on short-term goals without making corresponding changes to long-term objectives.<sup>89</sup> The habitual use of successful methods (causing the organization to prefer their continued use at the expense of other experimental methods) and a lack of peer competitors also affect the rate and occurrence of adaptation in an organization.<sup>90</sup>

In complex environments like that in Iraq or in other real or potential counterinsurgency environments, the ability to rapidly adapt might determine success or failure for the organizations involved in any contest of competing missions.<sup>91</sup> Adaptation in these

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<sup>88</sup> Rabasa, et al, argues that successful counterinsurgency requires "unfettered adaptability" and this can be achieved by granting counterinsurgents local autonomy. See, Rabasa, et al, *Money in the Bank: Lessons Learned from Past Counterinsurgency (COIN) Operations*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2007, pp. 69-70. Mockaitis agrees and argues that "tight control of operational units does not work well in a counterinsurgency." See, Mockaitis, Thomas R., *The Iraq War: Learning from the Past, Adapting to the Present, and Planning for the Future*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2007, p. 41.

<sup>89</sup> Holling, C. S., "From Complex Regions to Complex Worlds," 2004, [ecologyandsociety.org](http://www.ecologyandsociety.org), Volume 9, Issue 1, <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol9/iss1/art11>, accessed 17 December 2007.

<sup>90</sup> Sitkin, Sim B., "Learning Through Failure: The Strategy of Small Losses," *Organizational Learning*, Eds. Cohen, M. D. and L. S. Sproull, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1994. See also, Gunderson, Lance H. and C. S. Holling, *Panarchy*, Island Press, WA, 2002.

<sup>91</sup> Metz, Steven, *Armed Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Information Revolution and Post-Modern Warfare*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2000. See also, Metz, Steven, *Learning from Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2007.

environments must occur, at a minimum, at the tactical level where opponents are pitted in their struggle and, for the counterinsurgent, this adaptation must be resourced and nourished by higher command authorities.<sup>92</sup> Valuable organizational lessons can be drawn from this adaptation that affects not only the lower echelons but the middle and higher ones as well. Acquiring and ensuring adaptability as a core competency will promote success in regular and irregular conflicts alike.

## **2.3 CONCLUSIONS**

The previous description of the process of organizational adaptation must be put into proper context. While understanding, detailing, and revealing the process of organizational adaptation is in itself valuable it is not nearly as useful as when it is set within a larger framework of environmental perception and decisions made based on this perception. Perception and broad organizational planning based on this perception constrain, limit, and in some rare cases, expand organizational opportunities for adaptation.<sup>93</sup> When large hierarchical entities arrive at decisions

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<sup>92</sup> Nagl, John A., *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2002.

<sup>93</sup> The rare cases are where adaptation is not treated as a happenstance or reaction but instead is targeted and accelerated by the design of the system. Individuals and organizations naturally adapt but this process can be augmented (if carefully implemented and monitored) by creating structures and processes that enable adaptation. For example, if used accordingly, communications can enable an organization to obtain greater self- and situational awareness. This awareness, combined with sound decision making and proper execution, can lead to greater organizational effectiveness, enhanced learning opportunities, and accelerated adaptation. But there are many unforeseen drawbacks to planned structural adaptive accelerants and these drawbacks can lead to a reduced ability to

that encompass the entire organization, future decisions and thus the ability to adapt are necessarily circumscribed. For instance, if the U.S. Army were to make the choice, plan, budget, and implement acquisition and training for an entirely armored force, it cannot quickly or easily reverse this decision, particularly once the decision has been acted on by the force. The funds, knowledge base, and structures supporting such a decision are durable and encumber the organization for a significant period of time. Additionally, the intangible, tacit, cultural, and cognitive aspects derived from and related to this choice further constrain future options for change, learning, and adaptation. The choices made either position the organization closer to or further from the ideal organizational form for organizational mission achievement.<sup>94</sup> Proximity to or distance from the ideal is significant for the process of organizational adaptation.<sup>95</sup>

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adapt. For instance, an overloaded communications system can cause system-wide failure, mission failure, or can effect an inundation of the intended recipient(s). In this case, the implementation of a system to enhance adaptation may actually serve to reduce its realization.

<sup>94</sup> This is important in the current (or any for that matter any) environment. As Nagl argues, “The demands of conventional and unconventional warfare differ so greatly that an organization optimized to succeed in one will have great difficulty in fighting the other.” Ibid, p. 219.

<sup>95</sup> Of course, the ideal (a Platonic ideal) organizational form is impossible to achieve but it is a useful yardstick for measuring an organization’s ability to accomplish its objectives and for its ability to adapt. For instance, perfect (or ideal) organizational adaptation would occur instantaneously and automatically. Each degree of separation from the ideal indicates an organizational flaw. Even if these flaws cannot be corrected (hence, no organization is ideal) they do indicate weaknesses. Where flaws are significant, they can be improved on a spectrum approaching as near to the ideal as possible. The conceptual ideal is important for recognizing flaws that cannot be repaired and flaws that can be repaired and for indicating what repairs/corrections should or should not be attempted or made. This helps clarify changes to organizational inputs and outputs in the adaptive process.

Encompassing decisions either expand or contract options for future change and thus determine the level of adaptation required by the organization.

The further removed an organization is from the ideal, the more that organization will have to adapt to achieve organizational success as defined by mission accomplishment or goal realization.<sup>96</sup> This poses a significant problem for any form of organization. For example, if an organization needs greater size in order to achieve organizational goals but cannot increase its membership because of security concerns or insufficient resources, then the organization will either have to make significant changes to its inputs or will have to adjust outputs to better reflect capacity. Likewise, if an organization is well resourced and large but is too cumbersome to enact rapid changes either to structure, training, equipment, etc., then the organization will also have to adjust either inputs or outputs or both.

The ability to adapt and the proper resourcing of this adaptation is fundamental to the process of achieving organizational success in a dynamic environment and when competing against another organization (or organizations) in this environment. The decisions made prior to engaging in this competition are significant determinants of the ability to adapt and thus the ability to achieve organizational success. The next two chapters will examine decisions made in regard to the U.S. Army as it restructured in the wake of the end of the Cold War period and as it

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<sup>96</sup> For example, Austin Long argues that, “a force that is structured to fight a high-intensity conflict against another nation-state’s military is ill-equipped to adapt to the challenge of COIN. It is not just physically ill equipped but, much more importantly, mentally ill equipped.” Also, “by virtue of long years of training and education, officers are inculcated with patterns of thinking that reflect this culture. In the case of the U.S. military, these patterns are both incredibly useful in high-intensity conflict (the mission of most of the military) and incredibly inappropriate in COIN.” See, Long, Austin, *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006*, RAND Counterinsurgency Study Paper 6, 2008, p. 27.

progressed into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, through the events of 11 September 2001 and OEF, and as it embarked on OIF.

### 3.0 ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS: CONSTRAINING ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION AFTER THE COLD WAR

*“Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.”—Dwight D. Eisenhower*

The closing stages of the Cold War can be viewed as the beginning of the end for monopolized control of the international security environment by nation-states. Although states have never had complete control over the dispensation of violence within or across their borders nor over the behavior of other actors and organizations within the system of states, they have, for at least the majority of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, been recognized as the principal arbiters of exchange in war, conflict, and negotiation. For example, states and state-based organizations created the post-World War II system of inter- and intra-state security maintenance as well as the rules and laws of war governing state- and non-state based violence through various international conventions and accords. International forums for negotiation, cooperation, and rule enforcement, like the United Nations (UN) and the UN Security Council, were also established by states for the creation and maintenance of binding international agreements drafted by member nations. These creations modified state and non-state organizational behavior (through internationally imposed and accepted rules and procedures) and created barriers to entry into the international security environment by competitors not sanctioned by a state or the system of states (states and their

proxies were, for the most part, the only officially recognized entities in the international security system during the Cold War). States have also been instrumental in brokering agreements between and amongst other states as well as between and amongst states and sub-state actors.<sup>97</sup>

Although this system by no means collapsed alongside the Soviet Union in 1991, it certainly lost saliency with the global retreat from superpower rivalry and with the rise of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) filling many of the roles traditionally played by states, particularly in the Third World or spaces formerly occupied with a U.S. or Soviet presence.<sup>98</sup> Organizations that were once suppressed by states, either by design or through circumstantial means of control imposed by the framework of the international security system, were now much freer to organize, operate, and evolve.

In conjunction with and as a contributor to the demise of monopolistic state control over the international security environment has been the viral spread of the tools and forces associated

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<sup>97</sup> For instance, the United States negotiated ceasefires and peace accords between Israel and Egypt and Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization and took an active part in dozens of UN sponsored actions around the globe.

<sup>98</sup> The rise of international NGOs has been attributed to the vacuum created by the end of the Cold War, particularly in respect to declining foreign aid, the opening of Eastern Europe, the UN legitimization of cross-border NGO intervention in humanitarian crises, and the prevalence of democratic elections in the post-Cold War period in much of the Third World. See Lindenberg, Marc and Coralie Bryant, *Going Global: Transforming Relief and Development NGOs*, Kumarian Press, Bloomfield, CT, 2001, pp. 9-11. It is not that international NGOs and illicit organizations did not exist during the Cold War but an increase in their size, scope, and freedom of maneuver has been correlated with the fall of the Soviet Union. It should be noted that the vacuum following the collapse of the Soviet Union also allowed for the rise of more nefarious organizations as well: transnational criminal groups, transnational terrorist organizations, and multiform ethnonationalist organizations. See, Pillar, Paul, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Brookings, Washington DC, 2003, pp. 41-43.



with globalization.<sup>99</sup> Of particular importance to the international security environment has been the increased incidence and ease of travel (aided by the removal of many formal and informal restrictions placed on travel to and from formerly communist countries, reduced costs of travel, and the increased availability of forms of international travel) and the exponential growth, availability, and use of communications devices (aided by ubiquitous cell phones and laptop computers, various miniaturized data storage devices, pervasive internet accessibility, and manifold encryption technologies). The increased access to and use of various forms of international travel and communication made borders less relevant and put peoples and states in closer propinquity. Organizations of various types and functions were enabled by and adapted to this expanded freedom of communicative means and movement.

The weakening of the international state system combined with the previously mentioned forces of globalization led to a new era of international order (or disorder) where state- and non-state agencies and organizations are in competition with one another for, through various means,

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<sup>99</sup> Gompert and Gordon comprehensively argue that globalization provides “the easy flow of information, technology, ideas, people, substances, and money; vulnerability of world markets, links, infrastructure, and commons; the rise of dissatisfied nonterritorial communities that transcend, defy, and weaken national identification; antipathy toward the values and effects of globalization, especially among its ‘losers’; revival of old identities and communities, especially religious ones, kept in check by the nation-state system; growing viability and capabilities of nonstate actors; the significance for all states of fragile and failed states; turbulence and disorientation that come with rapid change; connectivity and mobility that can be controlled only at great difficulty and cost; the immediacy and amplification of the impact of actions due to global media, making the ‘propaganda of the deed’ more important than the material effects of the deed.” See Gompert, David C. and John Gordon IV, *War by Other Means: Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, p. 25.

control of geography, people, and ideas.<sup>100</sup> The post-Cold War international security environment leveled the field of competition insofar as non-state agencies and organizations can spar at various levels, if not yet equally, with their state-based counterparts.<sup>101</sup> While states and the coercive arsenals they maintain still act as price-setters in the international market of security provision, the use of force, and of negotiation among people and groups of people, and will likely maintain this position of prominence for quite some time, the end of the Cold War and the concurrent spread of the forces of globalization marked a weakening of and departure from many of the constraints once created through and imposed by the international state system. This is important for the development of any organization that is international or intends to be international in disposition and scope. As Brian Jackson asserts, “The environment in which any given group operates is perhaps the dominant factor influencing both the group’s incentive and its capacity to learn. The environment defines the group’s operational opportunities and the types of learning it might pursue to take advantage of them.”<sup>102</sup> At the end of the Cold War, states and sub-state organizations were entering a new security environment where the erosion of traditional borders and other means of state control were forcing a revaluation if not redesign of

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<sup>100</sup> Thomas Barnett argues that “the sources of mass violence have migrated downward, or from the state to the individual” and that “traditional economic power and competition have migrated upward, or from the state to the system.” This is a truly disturbing trend in the post-Cold War international security environment and represents a marked shift from the bipolar security system that evolved out of World War II and its focus on states and state power. See, Barnett, Thomas P.M., *The Pentagon’s New Map*, Berkley Books, NY, 2005, p. 85.

<sup>101</sup> As Phil Williams notes, “Nonstate actors are generally able to use the Internet as a force multiplier in their competition with states.” See, Williams, Phil, *From the New Middle Ages to a New Dark Age: The Decline of the State and U.S. Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2008, p. 30.

<sup>102</sup> Jackson, Brian A., et al, *Op Cit*, pp. 43.

“existing paradigms.”<sup>103</sup> Organizations operating in the post-Cold War environment, be they state-, sub-state, or transnational in nature, would have to create and/or maintain an ability to adapt to a rapidly changing and unpredictable international security system in order to survive and accomplish organizational objectives. Existing paradigms would not be adequate in the post-Cold War world. As Washington would find out, “mutual annihilation meant reliance on principles that were not easily transferred from one security era to the next.”<sup>104</sup>

This chapter will examine how the emergence and interpretation of the post-Cold War international security environment affected U.S. Army organizational development and how the decisions made regarding the structure, focus, and employment of the U.S. Army in this environment limited or expanded its capacity for organizational adaptation in the post-9/11 world. These antecedent conditions are of significant import, indeed instrumental, in shaping how organizational forms evolved in the post-Cold War environment. Additionally, the choices made in response to the changes occurring in this period critically constrained (as will be demonstrated in this chapter) *and* enabled (as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters) the future ability of the U.S. Army to adapt organizationally following the attacks of 9/11 and subsequently, during OIF.

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<sup>103</sup> National Defense Panel, Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, NDP, December 2007.

<sup>104</sup> Lambakis, Steven J., “Reconsidering Asymmetric Warfare,” Joint Force Quarterly, Issue 36, 2004.

### **3.1 THE POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT, PART I (THE THIRD WORLD)**

It is difficult to calculate the total effect that the end of the Cold War had on the international security environment although part of this effect was obvious: “the demise of the Cold War lessened fears about dangers that might stem from a massive confrontation of the military forces of the two sides in Europe, the Soviet-American nuclear arms race spiraling out of control, or the initiation, spread, and escalation of proxy wars fought in developing countries as part of the broad ideological struggle.”<sup>105</sup> Another partial effect of the end of the Cold War was less obvious: “policymakers and academics who focused on superpower competition often failed to recognize that in the long term it is regional and local factors—not necessarily related to superpower competition—that have determined and will determine the course of politics in the transitional area where the majority of the world’s population live, and in many cases barely survive.”<sup>106</sup> Additionally, because the forty odd years of international tension that the Cold War created had now for the most part come to an end, some assumed that the end of superpower rivalry would usher in an era of unprecedented and persistent peace.<sup>107</sup> Others offered a less sanguine and countervailing viewpoint insofar as the end of the Cold War signaled a new, less predictable, era where persistent conflict would prevail and where proxy and smaller wars would

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<sup>105</sup> “Introduction,” *Violent Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Eds. Charles Hermann, Harold K Jacobson, and Anne S. Moffat, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Midwest Center, Chicago, IL, December, 1997, p. vi.

<sup>106</sup> Sloan, Stephen, “Introduction,” *Low Intensity Conflict: Old Threats in a New World*, Eds. Edwin G. Corr and Stephen Sloan, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 1992, p. 4.

<sup>107</sup> See for instance, Fukuyama, Francis, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Avon Books, New York, 1992.

continue, albeit without their superpower sponsors: “the perception that the Cold War released a pent-up torrent of ethnonationalist conflict was, however, to a significant degree illusory, for such conflict had been pervasive during the Cold War period.”<sup>108</sup> Steven R. David went so far as to link the states of the former Soviet Union with those of the Third World in their inherent ability to sow disorder in the international security environment merely by failing to be democratic and therefore bereft of the “peace-inducing effects that this form of governance provides.”<sup>109</sup>

Although the end of the Cold War did lessen the chances of a general, world war, either on the Eurasian landmass or through a massive nuclear exchange, its end also contributed to the eruption of various destabilizing dynamics as the superpowers’ control over and maintenance of the international security system waned.<sup>110</sup> As Gregory O’Hayon notes, “when the Cold War ended, many believed that the final hurdle blocking the realization of Kant’s idealist dream had

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<sup>108</sup> Freeman, Michael, “Theories of Ethnicity, Tribalism and Nationalism,” *Ethnic Conflict, Tribal Politics*, Ed. Kenneth Christie, Curzon Press, Surrey, UK, 1998, p. 15.

<sup>109</sup> David, Steven R., “The Necessity for American Intervention in the Post-Cold War World,” *The United States and the Use of Force in the Post-Cold War Era*, The Aspen Institute, Washington, DC, 1995, pp. 40-41.

<sup>110</sup> One of these destabilizing factors was the re-emergence of tribal forms of governance and association throughout the Third World and in the transition countries of Eastern Europe. Kenneth Christie notes that various tribal sentiments and other uncontrollable forces existed prior to colonialism, throughout the Cold War, and beyond. He links these sentiments to the existence of tribal forms that existed as an early form of human organization, well prior to the creation of modern nation-states. His argument is that these tribal organizational forms have existed and will continue to exist regardless of the overarching system imposed upon them. See, Christie, Kenneth, “Introduction: The Problem with Ethnicity and ‘Tribal’ Politics”, *Ethnic Conflict, Tribal Politics: a Global Perspective*, Curzon Press, Surrey, UK, 1998.

been eliminated.”<sup>111</sup> O’Hayon also notes that “the peace dividend promised by the end of the superpower confrontation failed to materialize in many parts of the world...history had not ended; in fact it was fuelling the Revenge of Nations, as ideological conflicts were being replaced by identity-based ones. Also, rather than dampening the sources of conflict, globalization was in fact fanning its flames.”<sup>112</sup> The coincidence of the end of the Cold War with globalization set in motion a series of changes whereby largely unrestrained, in fact empowered, non- or sub-state actors and organizations emerged and states became “less certain of their authority and much less certain of the utility of using armed force to make war against other states or to ensure order and stability at home.”<sup>113</sup>

Secondary and tertiary effects of the end of the Cold War were even more difficult to ascertain. Although the Cold War had ended and the fear-inducing concept of nuclear annihilation receded, other, perhaps more pernicious enemies, largely subdued since the end of World War II, gained renewed strength and an enhanced significance. The international security environment had changed significantly enough to allow the emergence and, in some cases, reemergence of a variety of sub-state criminal, terrorist, and other armed organizations. The most significant change for these organizations in the post-Cold War international security environment was that, because of empowering effects of globalization, they were far more capable of sowing disorder both domestically and abroad. The changes wrought by the demise

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<sup>111</sup> O’Hayon, Gregory B., *Big Men, Godfathers, and Zealots: Challenges to the State in the New Middle Ages*, Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2003, p. 469.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Burk, James, “Introduction, 1998: Ten Years of New Times,” *The Adaptive Military*, Ed. James Burk, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1998.

of the Soviet Union and processes of globalization put these sub-state organizations in a unique position while concurrently putting states and their militaries in a compromised position. Sub-state actors, nefarious or otherwise, could, with relative impunity, engage in a variety of behaviors not in accordance with international norms and agreements because of their status. The Cold War international security system was built upon the assumption that states (not sub-state actors) and state-based or state-sponsored organizations would be the arbiters of order and conduct in perpetuity. Therefore, states had no well defined mechanisms for dealing with sub-state organizations that failed to recognize and respect the conventions of Cold War-era state-based order.<sup>114</sup> In a weakened system where states were deemed the supreme ordering entity and most contracts, laws, treaties, and codes of conduct were emplaced to support the functioning of the state, sub-state actors, with sufficient power, could play a spoiling and undermining role. In the post-Cold War, globalized environment, the system was critically weakened.

Robert Mandel warned of the emerging transformation of the international security environment due to the end of the Cold War: “conflict in this new era does not appear likely to be organized, premeditated, large-scale war among the great powers over ideological differences...the utility of such wars has declined, while its costs have risen substantially.”<sup>115</sup> Mandel also argued that the post-Cold War international security arrangement “appears to encompass a three-stage process incorporating the decline of national sovereignty, the escalation

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<sup>114</sup> This problem exists yet today. Of particular notoriety is the inability of states to properly classify and handle purported members or affiliates of al-Qaeda under existing law. Even after 8 years of judicial interpretation and review, the proper status of ‘enemy combatants’ is still being questioned.

<sup>115</sup> Mandel, Robert, *The Changing Face of National Security: A Conceptual Analysis*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1994, p. 7.

of global interdependence, and the proliferation of anarchic conflict.”<sup>116</sup> In a similar vein, Steven Metz concluded that “the structure of the future global security system will probably replicate the late Cold War system in that sub-state, state, and supra-state actors will all remain strategically significant. The relationship of the three elements, however, will change.”<sup>117</sup> While the patent threat of superpower conflict remained omnipresent, if however unlikely in the post-Cold War environment, it was being augmented, if not surpassed, by other threats emanating from decaying backwaters of strategic importance largely ignored during the Cold War and almost completely forgotten in the near post-1991 period: the Third World. The emergence of the Third World and various actors and organizations spawned by Third World states would help to muddy even further the strategic relationship between the sub-state, state, and supra-state organizations that Metz identified.

### **3.1.1 The New, Old Third World**

Beginning with the decline of, particularly, European colonial powers after the conclusion of World War II, many Third World countries, especially those recently winning independence from colonial rule, sought or were compelled to take outside assistance and subsidy from the two bipolar superpowers. Much of this assistance came in the form of currency, weapons, or through the covert or direct support of the aligned government against an

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>117</sup> Metz, Steven, et al, *The Future of American Landpower: Strategic Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* Army, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 12 March 1996.



insurgency or for the support of a guerrilla movement against a non-aligned opponent.<sup>118</sup> Other assistance was less tangible but no less real: political support manifested in the underwriting of the regime in power. The cost of such support to the host nation was minimal and usually exacted no more toll than a pledged allegiance to one pole or another of the Cold War bipolar system. Conversely, the loss of support by the antagonists of the Cold War, as occurred after the collapse of the Soviet Union, imposed devastating costs on many nations of the Third World and to the nations that counted on these countries being stable partners in the maintenance of the international security environment.

The end of the Cold War affected the Third World doubly: proxies of the Soviet Union *and* the United States were no longer beneficiaries of superpower largess as their minimal strategic importance declined further still in the post-Cold War security environment. As many aligned Third World nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America lost their superpower sponsors

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<sup>118</sup> Richard J. Barnett notes that the Reagan administration was the first administration to underwrite a global program of guerrilla action against governments aligned to the Soviet Union. See, Barnett, Richard J., "The Costs and Perils of Intervention," *Low Intensity Warfare*, Eds. Michael T. Klare and Peter Kornbluth, Pantheon Books, NY, 1988, p. 213. But the Reagan administration was not the first to support guerrilla movements or governments fighting against guerrilla movements on a case by case basis. This occurred numerous times in Latin America throughout the history of the United States and to a lesser extent in Europe and Southeast Asia. The Soviet Union likewise had an extensive program of supporting guerrilla movements and insurgencies throughout the Third World; sometimes directly as in Afghanistan and sometimes indirectly as in Angola through Cuban proxy. What was noticeably different about the Reagan Doctrine was its correlation to Containment and how Containment during that administration was a "proactive rather than a reactive strategy." See, Lehman, Christopher M., "Protracted Insurgent Warfare: The development of an Appropriate U.S. Doctrine," *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency*, Eds. Richard Schultz, et al, Lexington Books, Lexington, MA, 1989, p. 128.

and as globalization's products spread to the far reaches of the planet's population, the United States government and the military establishment came to identify and define the threat to the United States and to world order not as a nation-state, rival, or burgeoning power but as more or less as a concept: *uncertainty*.<sup>119</sup>

Despite its purported role as the 'world's policeman,' supervision of the international security system was not a top priority of the United States and its allies immediately following the end of the Cold War. Instead, the United States and other countries were busy reaping the 'peace dividend' paid by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the planned reduction of resources that were for five decades devoted to the maintenance of the Cold War security system.<sup>120</sup> Consequently, Third World states were largely left to their own devices. Instead of reaping their own 'peace dividend', Third World states were now forced to provide for their own security and order and with their own meager resources. Thus, the cost of peace between the United States and the former Soviet Union would prove high for many Third World states in the post-Cold War world. As state-based control of the international security environment languished and as military and intelligence assets were directed away from the various areas of the globe that they previously occupied, the somewhat tidy and largely predictable, if frightening balance achieved by the superpowers during the Cold War, began to fade. In its place was left an imbalance of then poorly identified strategic significance: the uncertainty and unpredictability fomented by

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<sup>119</sup> Snow, Donald M., "The Shifting Threat and American National Security: Sources and Consequences of Change," *The Adaptive Military*, Ed. James Burk, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1998, p. 118.

<sup>120</sup> Much to the chagrin of the U.S. Army, "the benefits of this 'peace dividend' were never realized." Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations, 5 September 2008, p. 1-2.

various Third World states' inability to maintain their share of order in the new international security environment.

A significant portion of this uncertainty emanated from “the breakup of states, the creation of new ‘nation-states’, and the rise of ethno-nationalism and ultra-nationalist political forces in many parts of the world”<sup>121</sup> previously kept in check by colonial or superpower pervasion throughout the international security environment. As Kim Kadesch argues, the “dynamic nature of the international strategic environment is, in large part, a product of the strategy that our nation pursues.”<sup>122</sup> It should be added that the obverse is also true: the dynamic nature of the international strategic environment is largely a product of the strategy that the United States and other nations do not pursue. As the United States grappled with defining a comprehensive strategy in the post-Cold War era, the Third World languished. Despite the small bit part that the Third World played in defining strategy during the Cold War era and the even smaller role it played in the early post-Cold War era, its value in the calculus of ensuring balance and order in the international security system was about to change.

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<sup>121</sup> Posen, Barry R. “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Ed. Michael E. Brown, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1993, p. 3.

<sup>122</sup> Kadesch, Kim R., *The Army After Next: On a Collision Course with Strategic Reality*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 1998, p. 9.

### 3.1.2 The Third World Evolves into a Strategic Player, Sort of

As the United States began developing a post-Cold War strategy absent the pervasive threat of the Soviet Union, disorder in the international security system was starting to mount. In the Horn of Africa, the Caucasus, the former Yugoslavia, and elsewhere, the seemingly dormant forces of disorder were starting to marshal strength and resources as a new phenomenon emerged: ‘failed’ or ‘failing’ states.<sup>123</sup> There was (and still is, perhaps increasingly so) cause for concern. Many of these states, although not inherently strategically valuable in their own right, bordered or were a part of the strategically sensitive regions of Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Southwest Asia, and Eastern Africa. Post-Cold War political breakdowns manifested in or were the result of poor internal governance, serious resource depletion, significantly disrupted economic and trade systems, and loss of control or dissolution of state police and military services. Disruptions to what were, at best, the poorly functioning states of the Third World and the transition countries led to sub-state communal organizations seeking redress through alternative, and usually, less understood and less public forms of governance and order. As Olga Oliker and Thomas Szayna note, “the absence of effective political institutions makes it more likely that public discontent will take extralegal forms.”<sup>124</sup> Additionally, “weak institutions and limited central control make it more likely that dissatisfied groups will have the capacity to

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<sup>123</sup> Although the number of failed states is low, the number of failing states is quite high.

<sup>124</sup> Oliker, Olga and Thomas S. Szayna, *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the U.S. Army*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2003, p. xx.

mobilize and acquire weaponry.”<sup>125</sup> The burdens of basic governance and responding to the will and needs of the people tended to be more than many Third World countries could handle.<sup>126</sup>

Where groups of people could not seek redress for their grievances, service provision, or satisfactory law enforcement and dispute resolution from the state, they devolved into smaller, sub-state organizations and developed alternative forms of governance and rule enforcement. Many of these organizations and groups formed based on ethnography, kinship, community, or tribal relations; their allegiance to the state or the idea of a state became less important than group and/or organizational survival. These organizations and groups were little concerned with larger, post-Cold War, strategic issues and were likely even less concerned with meeting their country’s (or in some cases, their former country’s) international obligations to uphold order and the rule of law. When conflict erupted in these areas, “there was a general disregard for conventional distinctions between people, army and government.”<sup>127</sup> Additionally, “virtually no rules of traditional warfare apply...there is normally no formal declaration or termination of conflict, no easily identifiable enemy military formations to attack and destroy, no specific territory to take and hold, no single credible government or political actor with which to deal, no international legal niceties such as mutually recognized national borders and Geneva

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Jones, Douglas D. Understanding Measures of Effectiveness in Counterinsurgency Operations, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 25 May 2006, p. 18.

<sup>127</sup> Duffield, Mark, Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security, Zed Books, London, 2001, p. 58.

Conventions to help control the situation, and no guarantee that any agreement between or among contending authorities will be honored.”<sup>128</sup>

The new post-Cold War international security environment, with its share of traditional, transitional, and failed states, and relaxed international controls on state and sub-state behavior ensured that certain destabilizing characteristics were likely to endure: “significant complexity, turbulent change, wildly ranging scenarios of power centers and polarities, multiple revolutions across several domains and...profound uncertainty.”<sup>129</sup> As Martin van Creveld argues, “what we witness is not the establishment of a new disorder; instead, it represents a reversion to the old one.”<sup>130</sup> In this sense, what many perceived as new actors on the international security scene were actually old ones that had been suppressed or co-opted by the state or the international security structure but were now freed from formal international or state-based tethers. In some cases, control shifted from “legitimate governments to new half-political, half-criminal powers” that would prosper in a “failed-state operational environment.”<sup>131</sup> Failed states allowed for the emergence of traditional and non-traditional power centers such as sheiks, warlords, and chieftains, to name but a few. Each of these power-brokers posed problems for any effort to

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<sup>128</sup> Fishel, John T. and Max G. Manwaring, *Uncomfortable Wars Revisited*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 2006, p. 45-46.

<sup>129</sup> Frost, Robert S., *The Growing Imperative to Adopt ‘Flexibility’ as an American Principle of War*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 1999, pp. 34-35.

<sup>130</sup> Creveld, Martin van, *The Culture of War*, Ballantine Books, NY, 2008, p. 304.

<sup>131</sup> Bunker, Robert J., *Five-Dimensional (CYBER) Warfighting: Can the Army After Next be Defeated Through Complex Concepts and Technologies?*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 10 March 1998, p. 1.

impose ‘normal’ systems of governance in areas where traditional order had weakened or, more rarely, dissolved.

The same state breakdown that produced non-traditional forms of governance and organization also led to the creation of significant swaths of territory, or cleavages, where laws and rules applied only in the vaguest sense. Where sheiks, warlords, and chieftains emerged, so too did various forms of illicit organizations. As Wyn Rees argues, “both organized crime and terrorism are believed to flourish in the same environments where there is disorder and an absence of governmental control”; i.e, failed and failing states.<sup>132</sup> Crime, organized or otherwise, tends to be endemic in areas where government imposed order breaks down. Particularly vexing and dangerous in the post-Cold War era is how criminal organizations not only emerged in areas where government interference and control was weak but also how they migrated to these areas to avoid any impositions on their activities or prosecution by law enforcement agencies that tend exist in a more traditionally ordered society. Aided by advanced communications and modes of travel, various illicit transnational groups found a welcome home in areas where the state was weakened or failing, particularly in the Third World and transition countries.

In regions where multiple transitional, failing, or failed states shared a common border, this devolution from formal government would prove particularly disruptive. Local illicit organizations were free to join with transnational illicit organizations of criminal, terrorist, genocidal, or other intent. When these organizations made their way into population centers, particularly in the Third World, the problem only intensified. As is typical of most Third World

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<sup>132</sup> Rees, Wyn, “Linking Organised Crime and Terrorism,” ECPR Standing Group on Organised Crime Newsletter, Volume 5, Issue 2, May 2006, p. 8.

and transition countries, concentrations of people, whether clustered in a city or in homogenous identity-based enclaves within a city, posed significant problems for any internal *or* external agency seeking to restore order by propping up or creating a semblance of a working government. Urban operations are particularly difficult for organized forces given the complexity of the terrain and the anonymity of the people occupying this terrain. For military organizations planning to conduct operations in an urban area, the built-up, concrete jungle environment is the “great equalizer.”<sup>133</sup> Also, “issues that at one time might have been classified as law enforcement, health, or labor issues are now emerging as threats to the nation-state and to international stability.”<sup>134</sup> In fact, many issues that might have once been easily handled by the state or by a collection of states were, in post-Cold War failing and failed states, insurmountable. With no working government or state apparatus from which to direct resources, external states, militaries, and internationally sanctioned organizations were forced to make tough decisions as to whether to intervene in these states. This was especially troublesome given the dearth of international capacity to manage operations in such an environment. In many cases, this gap in service provision and in rule enforcement was naturally filled by illicit organizations: they could ply their trade while providing social services that the state could no longer endow. As a result, the Third World, in a rather short period of time, had gone from occupying a role as a strategic

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<sup>133</sup> Posen, Barry, “Urban Operations: Tactical Realities and Strategic Ambiguities,” *Soldiers in Cities: Military Operations on Urban Terrain*, Ed. Michael C. Desch, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, October 2001, p. 151.

<sup>134</sup> Smith, Paul J., “Transnational Security Threats and State Survival: A Role for the Military?,” *Parameters*, Autumn 2000, pp. 87-88.



cheerleader or pawn of or for one or the other bipolar powers, to forgotten points on the map, to a significant source of potential and real challenges to the post-Cold War security system.

### **3.2 THE POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT, PART II (THE U.S. ARMY)**

In the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, consecutive U.S. presidents and congresses had the opportunity to interpret the post-Cold War security environment and set strategies that would guide the size, development, and use of the armed forces. Of particular importance to these administrations and congresses was maintaining the United States' role as the lone superpower and principal architect of the 'new world order.' Out of this interest and interpretation of the international security environment evolved what subsequently came to be known as the Clinton Doctrine.

The Clinton Doctrine was premised on the fact that the world was increasingly interdependent and that the primary beneficiary of this interdependency was the United States; in particular, its massive global economy. Therefore, the United States had a "vested interest in the maintenance of international stability, or world order."<sup>135</sup> In order to shift roles from the world's policeman (because of the collapse of the Soviet Union and recession of many of its ideological partners) to the world's stabilizer, the Clinton Doctrine proposed that the United States needed to

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<sup>135</sup> Jablonsky, David, "Army Transformation: A Tale of Two Doctrines," Transforming Defense, Ed. Conrad Crane, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, December 2001, p. 61.

create or sustain a force sufficient for handling multiple adversaries simultaneously while also maintaining a capacity to diminish instability wherever it arose. The prevailing assumption of the Clinton Doctrine was that even minor threats could lead to regional or global instability and thus undermine the position of the United States at the precipice of the globalized post-Cold War world hierarchy.<sup>136</sup> The Clinton Doctrine, implicitly, rebuked the reigning Weinberger and Powell Doctrines which stressed using military force only when national security was truly at risk.<sup>137</sup> Although national security and economic security were always closely linked, the Clinton Doctrine was explicit in conflating the two in the early days of the post-Cold War era.

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid, pp. 61-62. Robert Scales also cites a recurring interest of the United States for engaging emerging threats in the Third World insofar as interests in humanitarian concerns “stem from our historical idealism and our democratic values and heritage. As a nation we will continue to stand for what is good and right. If people need our help, we may act because our values demand that we do so.” See, Scales, Robert H., *America’s Army: Preparing for Tomorrow’s Security Challenges*, Army Issue Paper Number 2, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, November 1998.

<sup>137</sup> The Weinberger Doctrine, as it came to be known, insisted that “the United States should not commit forces to combat overseas unless the particular engagement or occasion is deemed vital to our national interest or that of our allies”. See, Weinberger, Caspar W., “The Uses of Military Power,” Remarks Prepared for the National Press Club, Washington DC, 28 November 1984. The Powell Doctrine’s first tenet rested on the question of whether or not national security was at risk. Powell, Colin L., “U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead,” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 71, No. 5, Winter 1992. These doctrines, because of their similarity, are sometimes combined as the “Weinberger/Powell Doctrine”. The chief difference between the two is Powell’s stressing of the need for broad international support, a logical addition to the Weinberger Doctrine in the post-Cold War, post-Persian Gulf War, international security environment. Noonan and Hillen argue that during the Clinton Administration, “most conflicts in which the U.S. might want to use military force were for very low geopolitical stakes for which

The development of the Clinton Doctrine put the U.S. Army in somewhat of a bind as this organization was the United States' principal military arbiter of stability and order, even if that mission had not yet been fully realized. As U.S. Army forces were being reduced (through the post-Persian Gulf War Reduction in Forces or RIF<sup>138</sup>) in response to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the diminution of the threat that country previously posed, they were now being asked to prepare for two radically different responsibilities: two possible and simultaneous major regional conflict (MRC) contingencies (anywhere and at any time but most likely on the Korean Peninsula and in the Middle East, chiefly Iraq); and random disturbances to global order including humanitarian crises and insurgencies. This post-Cold War paradigm for the potential use of U.S. Army forces was evaluated and documented in the 1993 Bottom-Up Review conducted by Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin. The Bottom-Up Review also concluded, perhaps in deference to the Weinberger and Powell Doctrines and despite the focus on global stability and peacekeeping directed by the Clinton Doctrine, that any contingency requiring the use of military force should be conducted and concluded rapidly, with a high probability of success, and

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Americans would not want to suffer casualties." See Noonan, Michael P. and John Hillen, "Is the Pentagon Preparing for the Last War?," HNN, 18 February 2002, <http://hnn.us/articles/562.html>, accessed 17 July 2008.

<sup>138</sup> Williams and Gilroy argue that "in response to the changed environment, most Western countries substantially reduced the number of people serving in uniform shortly after the Cold War ended...The reductions are deeply intertwined with the altered perceptions of threats and risks and new missions. To some extent, they also reflect the notion that modern information technologies can serve as 'force multipliers,' making it possible for a military to become more effective even as it reduces size." See Williams, Cindy and Curtis Gilroy, "The Transformation Personnel Policies," *Defence Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1, March 2006, p. 99.

while minimizing American casualties.<sup>139</sup> Thus, “the message for military planners became a bit muddled. Peacekeeping was important, but not a priority.”<sup>140</sup>

Despite the Clinton Doctrine’s elevation of what came to be known as Military Operations Other Than War or MOOTW<sup>141</sup> as a strategic mission set for which the U.S. Army would have to prepare, the Army’s focus would remain on the first part of the of recommendations made by the Bottom-Up Review: (MRC).<sup>142</sup> The Bottom-Up Review gave weight, cause, and credence to a choice that the U.S. Army would have likely made in this new, or any, environment if left to its own devices. Major combat operations had always been the focus of the U.S. Army, this despite a long history of engagements in operations that could fall

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<sup>139</sup> Davidson, Janine Anne, *Learning to Lift the Fog of Peace: the U.S. Military in Stability and Reconstruction Operations*, Dissertation, 2005, pp. 189-190.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> MOOTW incorporates a host of non-combat missions including but not limited to Humanitarian Assistance, Counter-Drug efforts, Peacekeeping, and Peace Enforcement, variously under the auspices of the UN, a coalition, or unilateral control.

<sup>142</sup> Thomas Donnelly and Frederick W. Kagan develop this point further: “The confusion over American strategy and defense policy in the 1990s bred a proliferation of increasingly complex statements of the missions for which the military should be designed and maintained. The primary mission that supposedly shaped the size and organization of the military in the 1990s, flowing from the premise that the requirement was to ‘fight and win the nation’s wars,’ was the ability to fight two nearly simultaneous ‘major regional conflicts,’ or MRCs. MRCs were variously defined, but the requirement to fight two always added up, curiously enough, to a military sized and shaped as it was in projections and plans made in 1992 and 1993—throughout the decrease and through a bewildering series of changes in military operational patterns and the international setting.” See, Donnelly, Thomas and Frederick W. Kagan, *Ground Truth: The Future of U.S. Land Power*, AEI Press, Washington DC, 2008, p. 11-12.

into the category of low-intensity conflict (LIC) or MOOTW.<sup>143</sup> Even as the pace of U.S. military operations increased by 300 percent between 1991 and 1997 (most if not all in MOOTW environments) and as the U.S. Army was beset by significant budget cuts, its focus remained on what was considered the greater of two evils: MRC.<sup>144</sup> And even as the Clinton Administration was touting the role and necessity of MOOTW in the post-Cold War security environment, such proclamations had little effect on the direction of U.S. Army policy. Convincing the U.S. Army,

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<sup>143</sup> The U.S. Army's penchant for identifying conflict by its intensity (low intensity, mid-intensity, and high-intensity) still persists today. This lumping of military missions into MOOTW was once grouped into low-intensity conflict or LIC. Brown argues that "grouping all LIC, whether insurgency or conventional, into one category is counterproductive for it may lead strategists and policymakers to think about them similarly." Certainly, lumping all of these operations other than war into a singular category would lead to the same conclusions. See, Brown, Michael L, "Vietnam: Learning from the Debate," *Military Review*, February 1987, p. 54. Historically, actions against the Plains Indians, in the Dominican Republic, during the Philippines Insurrection, in Panama, Grenada, Sinai, and in Lebanon would all fall into the catchall category of MOOTW and would all reflect missions that the U.S Army would prefer not to do. Reflexively, and almost by definition, if the U.S. Army preferred a task then it was war and if not, it was an operation other than war.

<sup>144</sup> Operations following Operation DESERT STORM "were antithetical to the traditional concept of war. The contingency operations expanded 'warfighting' beyond the context of the traditional maneuver battles and engagements. The new threats resided all along the full spectrum of conflict." See, Fontenot, Gregory, et al, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom Through 01 May 2003*, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2004, p. 10. Predictably, despite the increasing focus on and importance of MOOTW and stability in the Third World, Pentagon officials attempted to terminate the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations-Low Intensity Conflict (OASD SO-LIC) during both the Clinton and George W. Bush presidencies. And, "although Congress thwarted the move, only one OASD SO-LIC official had day-to-day responsibility for FID-[Foreign Internal Defense] policy." See, Strategic Survey, "US Military Doctrine and Counterinsurgency," *Strategic Survey 2008, The Annual Review of World Affairs*, 01 May 2004, p. 44.

Congress, and the American people that “political instability or outbreaks of various low-intensity conflicts in the form of ethnic conflict, separatist movements, and other types of particularly ‘dirty wars’ may represent meaningful threats to U.S. security” was unlikely.<sup>145</sup> Unwittingly, the Clinton Doctrine, and the conclusions drawn by the Clinton Administration’s Bottom-Up Review<sup>146</sup>, combined with the RIF, compelled the U.S. Army to make a strategic choice between focusing on MRC *or* MOOTW as a core competency and thus enabled further divorce between the U.S. Army and its proper organizational role as a supporter of U.S. policy.<sup>147</sup> Although the U.S. Army did plan for and conduct many MOOTW throughout the 1990s, this mission was invariably treated as a subset of and a distraction from preparing for ‘real’ war. This early post-Cold War choice, despite experience, policy, various warnings, and evidence contradicting the wisdom of this choice, would have a significant cascading effects on

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<sup>145</sup> Sloan, Stephen, “Final Reflections,” *Low-Intensity Conflict: Old Threats in a New World*, Eds. Edwin G. Corr and Stephen Sloan, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 1992, p. 303.

<sup>146</sup> “The review concluded that we will not have the forces to conduct operations in places such as Somalia and Bosnia and, at the same time, meet the regional conflict contingency requirements.” See, Krepinevich, Andrew, “Assessing the Bottom-Up Review,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, Winter 1993-94, p. 23.

<sup>147</sup> The RIF had a significant effect on the number and types of missions that the U.S. Army could reasonably pursue with competency with the tools at hand. If war were the only policy option that the U.S. Army focused on supporting then, ipso facto, the U.S. Army would be either less capable or incapable of supporting other policies. Metz argues that “war, in the American tradition, occurs when policy fails” and is thus anti-Clausewitzian in nature since Clausewitz stressed the interrelationship of war and policy. This distinctive tradition was expanding in the post-Cold War period. See Metz, Steven, “Victory and Compromise in Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review*, April 1992, p. 47.

the U.S. Army's ability to adapt in the rapidly changing post-Cold War international security environment.

### **3.2.1 The U.S. Army**

The decision by the U.S. Army to focus on the MRC contingency was not solely a reaction to post-Cold War defense reviews or the initiation of a new presidential doctrine. This decision was remarkably consistent with the focus that the U.S. Army had throughout the Cold War, particularly after the Vietnam War and certainly after the successful conclusion of the Persian Gulf War. As Morris Janowitz asserts, "whether the problem is missiles or manpower, planning toward the future tends to be a projection of existing trends, rather than an imaginative emphasis on revolutionary developments."<sup>148</sup> Victory over Iraqi forces led subsequent administrations to believe that the military, and by extension the U.S. Army, could accomplish any mission no matter how divergent from the institution's Cold War role.<sup>149</sup> The U.S. Army's principle mission was, of course, to fight and win our nation's wars which, by extension, did not mesh well with conducting OOTW, to include wars like that fought in Vietnam, and contributed to the Army treating all missions as war.<sup>150</sup> As Conrad Crane notes regarding the Vietnam experience,

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<sup>148</sup> See Janowitz, Morris, *The Professional Soldier*, MacMillan Publishing, New York, 1960, p. 29. The trend for the U.S. Army was very linear following the Vietnam War and favored, almost exclusively, conventional combat.

<sup>149</sup> Bacevich, A.J., "Learning from Aidid," *Commentary*, December 1993, p. 31.

<sup>150</sup> The mission of the Army, as captured in the capstone Field Manual (FM) 1-0, *The Army*, was slightly but importantly different than the mission of the Armed Forces in 1948, proposed by Harry S. Truman: to uphold and advance the national policies and interests of the United States. This mission is also slightly different than the

“Army involvement in counterinsurgency was first seen as an aberration and then as a mistake to be avoided. Instead of focusing on the proper synchronization of military and political tools with the objectives necessary for success in low intensity unconventional conflicts, the Army continued to concentrate on mid to high intensity conventional war.”<sup>151</sup>

The visceral and decades’ long reaction to the U.S. Army’s involvement in Vietnam, since that experience was really something other than war defined in the strictest sense, contributed to the marginalization of the U.S. Army Special Forces (SF),<sup>152</sup> the creation of the

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one that a soldier swears to upon entering the U.S. Army, to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Although the concept behind each of these missions is essentially the same, the end result of stating that the U.S. Army’s mission is to fight and win our nation’s wars is quite different when applied. See, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 1-0, The Army, June 2005, and Truman, Harry S., Functions of the Armed Forces and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 21 April 1948.

<sup>151</sup><sup>151</sup> Crane, Conrad C., Avoiding Vietnam: The U.S. Army’s Response to Defeat in Southeast Asia, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, September 2002, p. 2. Record argues a similar point, “the Army ignored counterinsurgency until it encountered insurgency again in Iraq. The Army studiously avoided any systematic appraisal of counterinsurgency lessons learned in Vietnam because such an appraisal would have suggested a responsibility to prepare for future insurgencies. One insurgency out of sight was all insurgencies out of mind.” Record, Jeffrey, “The American Way of War: Cultural Barriers to Successful Counterinsurgency,” CATO Institute, Policy Analysis No. 577, 1 September 2006, p. 15.

<sup>152</sup> Richard Betts, argues that the military consciously resisted involvement in the ‘politics’ of the Vietnam War and instead sought to focus on ‘actual combat.’ The missions of the U.S. Army Special Forces (which, blended politics and combat), or Green Berets, were anathema to military leaders preferring conventional strategic concepts and mass operations. See, Betts, Richard K., Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1977, pp. 129-138. The Army Special Forces (SF) are an element of Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF or SOF) (including Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs units).



aforementioned Weinberger Doctrine, the Powell Doctrine and belatedly, after the Persian Gulf War, a reduction in most of the unconventional capability still extant in the conventional force, particularly in the field of Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) and other specialists.<sup>153</sup> One way to dodge having to participate in conflicts or operations that the U.S. Army wished to avoid was to eviscerate the capability to conduct these missions. Abetting this purposeful decision was a noticeable absence of congressional and presidential oversight when the U.S. Army reduced the size and scope of the Special Forces following Vietnam and the FAO corps following the Persian Gulf War, despite lingering concerns of on-going insurgencies and guerrilla movements in various Third World locales. As Barry Posen warns, “civilians must carefully audit the doctrines of their military organizations to ensure that they stress the appropriate type of military operations, reconcile political ends with military means, and change with political circumstances and technological developments.”<sup>154</sup> Despite concerns regarding an uncertain post-Cold War international security environment, the U.S. Army was well on its way to securing a force dedicated to its singular, and preferred, mission set: combat.

By reducing the size of the force, and by highlighting the importance of the projected two MRC contingencies in the Clinton Doctrine, the Clinton Administration was complicit in forcing the U.S. Army to further specialize what forces remained. In conjunction with the U.S. Army’s predilection for combat over other possible mission sets, cuts to forces that did not directly contribute to the MRC paradigm were of minor concern. As Bahnsen notes, “The first defense budget items to be cut in cost-reduction moves are those with small numbers, few vocal

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<sup>153</sup> My thanks to Colonel G. Alex Crowther for discussing how these specialties were reduced following the end of the Persian Gulf War.

<sup>154</sup> Posen, Barry R., *The Sources of Military Doctrine*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1984, p. 241.

defenders, low budget priority, and thus no congressional or executive branch supporters. LIC and protracted war systems fall into this category.”<sup>155</sup> The LIC (or in 1990s parlance, MOOTW) community had few defenders in Congress, the administration, or in the U.S. Army, especially since many of the U.S. Army’s senior commanders in the post-Cold War period were Vietnam veterans and had little interest in maintaining capabilities and forces tailored to that kind of fight. The forces retained in the U.S. Army after the RIF were almost exclusively conventional and were structured either for combat, combat support (CS), or combat service support (CSS).<sup>156</sup> One of the few exceptions to this rule was the retention of SF which, at that time, had been stripped of many of its unconventional missions and was instead being used almost solely in conventional support of Corps and separate operations. Even if dramatic changes were deemed important following the RIF and in reaction to the changing international security environment, the planning and budgeting system that supported the U.S. Army moved at a ‘glacial’ pace and would likely be unable to support an expansion of U.S. Army capability or size, save perhaps for provisioning new technologies and weapon systems.<sup>157</sup>

The post-Cold War RIF and specialization of U.S. Army forces for conventional missions led to a perverse unintended consequence of particular import when the Army had to participate in unconventional or MOOTW missions: the need for greater numbers of and more generalized

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<sup>155</sup> Bahnsen, Peter, “Protracted Warfare and the Role of Technology: The United States,” *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency*, Eds. Richard Schultz, et al, Lexington Books, Lexington, MA, 1989, p. 208.

<sup>156</sup> Many Combat Service Support units and personnel were intentionally moved into the Reserve forces following Vietnam. The intent of this move was to make it more difficult to fully deploy the U.S. Army without broad public and congressional support and acquiescence.

<sup>157</sup> Builder, Carl H., and James A. Dewar, “A Time for Planning? If Not Now, When?,” *Parameters*, Summer 1994, pp. 5-7.

command and staff personnel and capacity. Reducing, consolidating, and further specializing military occupational specialties (MOS) required more, not less personnel (for coordination and support) and information flow among these personnel, commands, and across the U.S. Army, particularly in complex MOOTW environments where many difficult and unusual decisions had to be made by commanders. As Creveld argues, “the obverse side of specialization is, inevitably, centralization. The more specialized the members and units of any given organization, the less capable any of them separately is of making independent decisions that may affect the whole, and the greater the need for overall direction from the top.”<sup>158</sup> To alleviate decreased capability wrought by the RIF and force specialization, the Clinton Administration and the U.S. Army proposed to take advantage of the ongoing Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and the technologies associated with the RMA. But, paradoxically, the U.S. Army’s incorporation of advanced information processing technology, sensors, and data acquisition devices did not relieve the pressures of centralization and specialization, it increased them. The RIF, specialization, and centralization combined to necessitate greater direction from commanders and enhanced coordination, interpretation, and processing from their staffs. The great promise of technological marvels replacing staffs and support personnel shed to realize the peace dividend was never realized. Instead, the workload of remaining personnel and staff members increased and consequently their evaluation and cognitive capacities were reduced.<sup>159</sup> U.S. Army units thus lost a significant component of their overall ability to gather and process

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<sup>158</sup> Creveld, Martin van, *Command in War*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1985, p. 236.

<sup>159</sup> Early, Drew N., *Revisiting the Staff: Static or Dynamic*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 17 December 1993, p. 25.

information, plan, and learn when responding to what where increasingly joint and combined missions in complex Third World environments.

Technology and the RMA would come to be a panacea for successive administrations, congressional advocates, and U.S. Army planners insofar as it inherently (and supposedly) increased ‘capability’ and justified expensive weapons and sensor platforms that would enable the U.S. Army to become the full-spectrum warriors envisioned in the Clinton Doctrine: equally capable of restoring stability and conducting high-intensity conflict against a near competitor anywhere on the planet. Even as the RMA provided the tools necessary for increased awareness, communication, and precision, facile faith in the nostrums promised by the RMA would only lead to and justify further specialization, particularly in the U.S. Army’s preferred realm of combat, at a time where skills other than combat were at a premium.

### **3.2.2 Invention is the Mother of Necessity**

The U.S. Army’s predilection for technological solutions to doctrinal and environmental conundrums paired nicely with the 1990s RMA and the emerging focus on ‘capabilities,’<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> “In the next several years, DoD will seek to further strengthen both the culture and the capability to develop and exploit new concepts and technologies in order to make our forces more responsive to an uncertain world.” Also, “The U.S. Military must be a capabilities-based force that gives the national leadership a range of viable options for promoting and protecting U.S. interests in peacetime, crisis, and war.” Cohen, William S., Quadrennial Defense Review, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997.

especially when facing amorphous and unpredictable adversaries.<sup>161</sup> Entering a rapidly changing international security environment, with new and challenging missions and a dearth of appropriate doctrine and personnel demanded substitutive capacity and capability.<sup>162</sup> “This is the thinking that developed during the 1990s. Improved surveillance, communications, information, and precision technologies could solve the problems of future war. This muddled our thinking about war.”<sup>163</sup> Conceptually, the technological advances and expanded aptitude promised by the RMA fit the bill for defense planners that sought to ‘illuminate’ an increasingly complex ‘battlefield.’<sup>164</sup>

The RMA’s arrival was quickly and thoroughly realized as new lexicon emerged describing the potential blending of projected military requirements with new technological

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<sup>161</sup> It should be noted that the start point for the 1990s RMA is debatable, given the rapid pace of changes in warfare during, at least, the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. See, Baumann, Robert F., “Historical Perspectives on Future War,” *Military Review*, March-April 1997.

<sup>162</sup> “The watchword during the post-Cold War drawdown has been that a generic technological superiority—rather than any searching ongoing reassessment of strategic, operationsl, and conceptual possibilities—is the key to the future.” Murray, Williamson, and MacGregor Knox, “The Future Behind Us,” *The Dynamics of Military Revolution: 1300-2050*, Eds., Knox, MacGregor and Williamson Murray, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p. 192.

<sup>163</sup> Brigadier General McMaster, H.R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008.

<sup>164</sup> “Illuminating the battlespace will permit DOD to see and therefore defeat foes by striking from standoff range or by supporting local warfighters with information. Thus DOD can cope with foes nastier than today’s canonical opponents.” Libicki, Martin C., *Illuminating Tomorrow’s War*, McNair Paper 61, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Washington, DC, October 1999, p. 123. This thinking assumed that everything of importance in the post-Cold War international security environment could be illuminated and that little contact with environmental issues or factors, such as populations, was likely or warranted.

capabilities. Terms such as ‘transformation,’ ‘dominance,’ and ‘decisive’ began filling the pages of various defense papers, journals, and doctrine. The now much maligned term ‘Shock & Awe,’ perhaps most famous for its usage in describing the preliminary attacks of OIF was one of these terms. The phrase Shock & Awe originated in a 1996 National Defense University publication of the same name. The Shock & Awe paper described a battlefield where the U.S. military could achieve ‘Rapid Dominance’ by employing an “overwhelming level of Shock and Awe against an adversary on an immediate or sufficiently timely basis to paralyze its will to carry on. In crude terms, Rapid Dominance would seize control of the environment and paralyze or so overload an adversary’s perceptions and understanding of events so that the enemy would be incapable of resistance at tactical and strategic levels.”<sup>165</sup> Shock & Awe would be achieved by “selectively denying knowledge to the enemy,” “influencing the will, perception, and understanding of an adversary,” and through technologies “that allow systems and entire force units to modify their signature from being very stealthy to being completely obvious. An ability to attack enemy information systems will also be critical, encompassing system technologies from laser-based countersensor weapons to embedded computer viruses.”<sup>166</sup> Although the authors of Shock & Awe admit that the notion of rapidity [only] “applies through the spectrum of combat from pre-conflict deployment to all stages of battle and conflict resolution,” their avoidance of describing the effects of Shock & Awe in a MOOTW environment are curious especially given the prevalence of deployments to MOOTW environments throughout the 1990s.

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<sup>165</sup> Ullman, Harlan, et al, Shock & Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 1996, p. xxv.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, pp. 2-3, 8-9, 70, 84, respectively.

The proponents of Shock & Awe certainly didn't draw upon contemporary adversaries in their extrapolation to future environments. It seems more likely that their myopic vision was based upon a bizarre pre-engineering of what would be possible in the future security environment with current and projected military technology and capability *if* the threat were the same as the one that the United States had prepared for since World War II.<sup>167</sup> Despite the technology-laden language and futuristic sound of the envisioned Shock & Awe environment, this vision of the future was remarkably unimaginative given the range of actors in the international security environment of the 1990s. Shock & Awe was founded not on a rational discernment of future adversaries based on the prevailing security environment but instead was based on a highly linear extension of the adversaries (or adversary) that the U.S. faced during the Cold War: chiefly, an organized and highly technological threat from a state-based adversary. Barry Watts and Williamson Murray point out in their study of military innovation that true innovation requires a break from the past, "institutions not only need to make the initial intellectual investments to develop visions of future war, but they must continue agonizing over such visions to discern how those wars might differ from previous conflicts due to changes in military technology and weaponry, national purposes, and the international security environment."<sup>168</sup> Also, "commitment to any particular institutional vision by senior leaders

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<sup>167</sup> The U.S. Joint Forces Command explains that this is a natural tendency, "Driven by an inherent desire to bring order to a disorderly, chaotic universe, human beings tend to frame their thoughts about the future in terms of continuities and extrapolations from the present and occasionally the past." See, U.S. Joint Forces Command, *The Joint Operational Environment: Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force*, JFC, 2008, p. 6.

<sup>168</sup> Watts, Barry and Williamson Murray, "Military Innovation in Peacetime," *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, eds. Murray, Williamson and Allan R. Millett, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, p. 406.

tends to have long-lasting consequences, whether for good or ill.”<sup>169</sup> A combination of a vision of future war, which was postulated to be highly kinetic on battlefields similar to that of the Persian Gulf War (the preferred battlefield), with an institutional taste for combat operations would have long-lasting consequences as it impeded an adjustment towards the realities of MOOTW and the post-Cold War international security environment.

Besides spawning fancy notions of future war, the RMA also promised to deliver clarity to a complex and confusing world by supplying technologies capable of supporting smaller forces with improved communications, greater sensor and intelligence capability, enhanced precision and lethality, and tailored logistical capacity. This did make sense in at least one fashion: increasing communicative means and processing power would enable forces to develop shared, or common, operational pictures while being able to deliver *combat* power precisely. Thus the RMA, given the predominant (though flawed) visions of future battlefield dispositions, would assist in achieving at least half of the Clinton Doctrine’s prescriptions for successful mission achievement in the post-Cold War security environment. But the focus of the 1990s RMA was decidedly not a revolution in doctrine inspired by new technologies and new ways of conducting operations. Instead, this RMA focused on various capabilities that could be provided by incorporating new technologies with *existing* doctrine, a fact which made this RMA all the less revolutionary.

The capabilities promised by (or ascribed to) the RMA were given relief by the concept of Shock & Awe. An ideational partner to the Shock & Awe concept was the 1997 National Defense Panel’s (NDP) Transforming Defense document. The 1997 NDP offered another, and very similar, vision of defense Transformation and suggested a variety of requirements for the

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid, p. 407.



future battlefield environment: “we will need greater mobility, precision, stealth, and strike ranges while we sharply reduce our logistics footprint.”<sup>170</sup> Remarkably, in a period where uncertainty was king and threats were unpredictable, the authors of the NDP, like those of Shock & Awe, were capable of ascertaining the appropriate capabilities necessary to managing an unidentified foe in an unidentified locale armed with unidentified weapons and possessing unidentified capabilities. One thing that the NDP was certain of was that “if we do not lead the technological revolution we will be vulnerable to it” and thus assumed away any alternatives to the projected organized, technological, state-based foe that the U.S. Army hoped and prepared for.<sup>171</sup> Additionally, and again with no reference to concrete, defined threats other than instability and terrorism, the NDP was capable of divining that “we must also provide the capabilities required for other emerging challenges. In many cases, the training and equipment used to prepare forces for major combat operations will also be able to handle these challenges.”<sup>172</sup> Therefore, even if other challenges arose, no matter how unpredictable, they could be handled with highly trained conventionally-focused forces. It is amazing how, given a rapidly changing security environment with multitudinous threats emerging across the planet, adding ‘capabilities’ to the existing force through a ‘transformative’ effort and via an RMA would be possible with existing training and equipment. This begs two questions: of what use there was for an RMA or transformative effort if the current force was adequate for any potential

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<sup>170</sup> National Defense Panel, Op Cit. This sentiment was also echoed in Grinter, Lawrence E. and Barry R. Schneider, “On Twenty-First Century Warfare,” *Battlefield of the Future: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Warfare Issues*, Ed. Schneider, Barry R. and Lawrence E. Grinter, Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, 1998.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

foes or contingencies and; why was any distinction made between MOOTW and combat operations or full-spectrum operations if all operations could be pursued with existing competency, capability, and forces? Would not the current, non-revolutionary and non-transformed force and military operations suffice?

The U.S. Army had its own vision of the future warfare, Transformation, and capabilities, summarized in the 1997 Annual Report on the Army After Next (AAN) Project. The AAN Project was a broad effort to define the role and structure of the U.S. Army as it evolved into a 21<sup>st</sup> Century force. Despite increased deployments throughout the 1990s to technologically crude, non-kinetic environments that could hardly be described as battlefields and a doctrinal and institutional knowledge vacuum in respect to these environments, the NDP projected that the U.S. Army would have to be able to move to and on future battlefields quickly so as to project combat power effectively and thus would have to advance into a force like that proposed by the AAN. As the AAN Project postulated, the U.S. Army of 2025 would have information dominance and “will achieve unprecedented strategic and operational agility by exploiting information technologies to create a knowledge-based Army. But to know and see with greater clarity is not enough. The Army must possess a complementary capacity to act on its superior knowledge by building into its structure the physical agility to move rapidly and adroitly across a larger and more lethal battlefield.”<sup>173</sup>

Like the recommendations made by the NDP, the AAN Annual Report advocated a preferred vision and capabilities more closely tied to the U.S. Army as it then existed or for an era that had passed 6 years prior. This report assumed capabilities that were unlikely achievable,

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<sup>173</sup> Reimer, Dennis J., The Annual Report on The Army After Next (AAN) Project, Headquarters Department of the Army, 1 August 1997, p. 4.

regardless of any real or perceived expansion of informational capacity, in a post-Cold War international security environment increasingly influenced not by envisioned, technologically adept near-peer foes, but instead by warlords, sheiks, and chieftains in complex contingencies in Third World environs. Information dominance *was* possible if the U.S. Army was facing the U.S. Army but in a world where complex contingencies were increasingly human in their dimensions, discerning intent and friend from foe with technological gadgetry was increasingly unlikely. The AAN concept relied on ‘information supremacy’ and enhanced intelligence that was not likely to develop, no matter the range of advanced sensors employed, in the post-Cold War international security environment.<sup>174</sup>

The U.S. Army was not alone in adopting a combat-heavy, state-centric vision of future warfare and indeed might have been guilty of purloining justification for this view from its sister services.<sup>175</sup> Thomas Barnett describes a 1991 meeting at the Pentagon where the ‘Manthorpe

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<sup>174</sup> Matsumura, John, et al, *The Army After Next: Exploring New Concepts and Technologies for the Light Battle Force*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1999, p. 11. See also, Rosenbaum, Michael D., *The Battle of the Bulge: Intelligence Lessons for the Army After Next*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 1999, p. 25.

<sup>175</sup> H.R. McMaster contends that, “it is as if the Army forgot that it operated on land and adopted wholesale the Air Force’s and Navy’s visions of future war.” McMaster, H.R., *Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War*, Center for Strategic Leadership Student Issue Paper, November 2003, p. 59. These visions have remained intact throughout OIF and OEF. For instance, the U.S. Navy and Air Force have notably disregarded or downplayed doctrinal writing for Counterinsurgency operations and the Air Force “continues to focus almost exclusively on major combat operations or situations where it alone can be decisive.” See, Beebe, Kenneth, “The Air Force’s Mission Doctrine: How the US Air Force Ignores Counterinsurgency,” *Air & Space Power Journal*, Spring 2006.

Curve’ (a graphical representation of an aggregated vs. Soviet threat projected across time named for William Manthorpe, the then Deputy Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence)<sup>176</sup> was unveiled: “The great Soviet threat that had dominated all strategic planning for decades was rapidly dissipating, but no matter how much it declined, it was unlikely to be surpassed by that of the aggregate rest-of-world (or ROW) threat. In effect, the ROW threat was the Pentagon’s way of expressing the cumulative total of lesser-included scenarios, meaning those non-great-power threats not big enough to size and shape your forces around. Instead, the normal practice at that time was deciding how many armored divisions or aircraft carriers America needed based on the biggest high-end threat you could identify—the Big One *du jour*. The assumption at the time was that if we built for the Big One, then that same mix of forces would adequately handle all the smaller threats.”<sup>177</sup> Assigning all less than existentially threatening cases of conflict as ‘lesser included’ scenarios conveniently justified the familiar Cold War force planning paradigm for the U.S. Army, Air Force, and Navy. Additionally, the services could portray their efforts as partial fulfillment of their joint responsibilities as legislated in the Goldwater-Nichols act of 1986. The services least likely to engage in MOOTW environments (the U.S. Navy and Air Force) assisted the U.S. Army in justifying and developing a force based on the other services’ preferred, if narrow, vision of the future international security environment and thus helped to ensure that the Army would be less adaptable to an environment and adversary that it was likely to, and eventually would, face.

Only if the future-world prognosticators were merely being coy and were hiding their certain knowledge of future opponents (who were going to look remarkably similar to the

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<sup>176</sup> Barnett, Op Cit, p. 69.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, p. 67.

projected U.S. Army) did these reports and justifications make much sense. This possibility was, however, unlikely. Instead, by the mid- to late 1990s, the Army was on a developmental path clearly divergent from the realities of the post-Cold War international security environment. The use of the terms ‘information dominance’, ‘combat’, and ‘battlefield’ supposed an environment where the U.S. Army was and would be dominant; an environment markedly different from that in which the U.S. Army was increasingly being asked to operate. This quixotic vision was abetted by a confused misappropriation of operational terms. Describing places like Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti as ‘battlefields’ and the stability operations that occurred in these areas as ‘combat’ demonstrated an unfortunate tendency to paint the world in terms that were familiar yet almost wholly inappropriate. “Unfortunately, the U.S. Army’s experience with stability and support operations in the Balkans, Haiti, Somalia, and numerous other locations did not lead American Soldiers to internalize these types of operations as a core mission...U.S. Soldiers tended to view conventional warfighting as their main purpose, and the Army has traditionally reinforced that mindset.”<sup>178</sup> Perhaps U.S. Army planners were suffering from a delusion similar to that which plagued the German military in 1941: they were falling victim to their own myths and predilections enhanced by a constant romanticizing of the Persian Gulf War and hope that future opponents would be just like the Iraqi Republican Guard.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Wright, Donald P. and Timothy R. Reese, *Op Cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>179</sup> Robert Doughty argues that the Germans distorted vision of the success of Blitzkrieg in France led to their misinformed understanding of their chances of victory in Russia in 1941. See, Doughty, Robert A, “Myth of Blitzkrieg,” *challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically: Can American be Defeated?*, Ed. Matthews, Lloyd J., Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 1998, p. 71-72.

As Paul Van Riper and Robert H. Scales argue, proposed substitutions of “advanced technology for conventional military capabilities reflect a peculiarly American faith in science’s ability to engineer simple solutions to complex human problems.”<sup>180</sup> Additionally, Van Riper and Scales assert that “acknowledging war’s inherent unpredictability, such a view of war renounces overreliance on any single capability, seeks maximum force versatility, and requires that military operations conform to the peculiar conditions and demands of the conflict itself.”<sup>181</sup> Thus, force adaptability would not necessarily benefit from the enhanced technology and attendant specialization of the RMA and the burgeoning Transformation program. As Jeffrey Isaacson claims, “technology alone does not determine military effectiveness. Specialized doctrine, tactics, training, and support are generally required to integrate, or absorb, technology into a military organization.”<sup>182</sup> The U.S. Army was obliging this argument by ensuring that its plans for infusing technological gains would be met with doctrine that was sufficiently tailored to these new technological advantages. AirLand Battle doctrine, a product of the Cold War, would suffice.

By the end of the 1990s, the RMA, Transformation, and existing doctrine were, conceptually, all mutually reinforcing concepts and programs. Invention became the mother of necessity, despite notable warnings contradicting the path and purpose of these programs.<sup>183</sup> But

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<sup>180</sup> Riper, Paul Van and Robert H. Scales, “Preparing for War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Parameters*, Autumn 1997, p. 4.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>182</sup> Isaacson, Jeffrey A., et al, *Predicting Military Innovation*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1999, p. 1.

<sup>183</sup> Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Shelton, despite laying the common claim that the primary purpose of the U.S. Army has been *and will* be to fight and win the Nation’s wars, warned that full-spectrum dominance would require more than just technological invention and modernization: “material superiority

instead of assisting in the development of an Army that was highly adaptable, as was recommended Joint Vision 2010<sup>184</sup>, the early Transformation effort was producing a force that was peculiarly and almost singularly tailored not to the post-Cold War international security environment but to the Cold War international security environment and an anticipated enemy mirroring the projected U.S. Army of the future. Despite estimations that this force would be full-spectrum capable and highly versatile, it was more likely that this force would be a highly modernized engine of pure combat and versatile only if the mission was taking down a similarly constructed force on a linear battlefield. As Antulio Echevarria argues, “the changes wrought by RMA will likely make warfighting more rather than less difficult. The means, environment, and dimensions of future war continue to transform it.”<sup>185</sup> The conclusions drawn from Robert Bolia’s study of the Yom Kippur War seem apt: “technology must not be allowed to surpass the development of doctrine and tactics to guide its usage, nor hailed to the exclusion of the human element.”<sup>186</sup>

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alone is not sufficient. Of greater importance is the development of doctrine, organizations, training and education, leaders, and people that effectively take advantage of the technology.” See, Shelton, Henry, H., Joint Vision 2020, America’s Military: Preparing for Tomorrow, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington DC, June 2000, pp. 1-3.

<sup>184</sup> “JV 2010, and its follow-on, supporting publication, Concept for Future Joint Operations: Expanding Joint Vision 2010, repeatedly and pervasively use the terms ‘flexibility’ and ‘adaptability.’ This reflects the clear realization that flexibility is crucial to successfully negotiating the future global security environment.” Frost, Robert S. Op Cit, p. 36-37.

<sup>185</sup> Echevarria II, Antulio J., “Dynamic Inter-Dimensionality: A Revolution in Military Theory,” JFQ 1997, p. 36.

<sup>186</sup> Bolia, Robert S., “Overreliance on Technology in Warfare: the Yom Kippur War as a Case Study,” Parameters, Summer 2004, p. 55.

### **3.2.3 The Three Cs of Post-Cold War Army Doctrine: Combat, Combat, and Combat**

The Clinton Doctrine, because of its emphasis on promoting stability, required an army that was truly full-spectrum in its capabilities. On one hand, the U.S. Army had to be capable of fighting and winning two MRCs, simultaneously. On the other hand, the U.S. Army had to be capable of managing a host of potential and likely interruptions to regional and global stability. Being a full-spectrum capable force meant possessing the ability to support (on the left end of the spectrum) domestic humanitarian operations and (on the right end of the spectrum) nuclear war, and everything in between. It could be reasonably assumed that the U.S. Army would begin to modify and develop doctrine tailored to achieve this objective principally because the Army's focus throughout the Cold War was almost exclusively tempered to high-intensity, force-on-force combat. Doctrine is "the fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives."<sup>187</sup> To appropriately prepare for instituting the directives and vision of the Clinton Administration, the U.S. Army would have to modify much of its old doctrine and develop new principles for the MOOTW mission in support of national objectives.

In the early post-Cold War period, U.S. Army doctrine was noticeably not full-spectrum, despite claims to the contrary.<sup>188</sup> Even in field manuals where one would expect to find full-

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<sup>187</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 12 April 2001, p. 171.

<sup>188</sup> "There can be no single, prescribed, authoritative Army doctrine for this strategic period. Hence, in 1993 our Army adopted a doctrine of full-dimensional operations, stressing principles to be learned and understood, then relying on the art of battle command to apply those principles in scenarios as they occur...this doctrine is a profound shift from the relatively deterministic and very appropriate scientific approach of the Cold War." See,



spectrum concepts and operational direction, the focus was decidedly in favor of only one narrow band of the spectrum: the one dedicated to combat.<sup>189</sup> Field Manual 7-98, Operations in a Low-Intensity Environment (19 October 1992), ominously unveiled an attempt to demonstrate how dominant Cold War combat operational concepts could transfer to MOOTW, “the tenets of AirLand Battle doctrine characterize successful conventional military operations and apply equally in LIC.”<sup>190</sup> Field Manual 100-23, Peace Operations (December 1994) reminds commanders that “training and preparation for peace operations should not detract from a unit’s primary mission of training soldiers to fight and win in combat. *The first and foremost requirement for success in peace operations is the successful application of warfighting skills.*”<sup>191</sup> [Emphasis in the original]. Field Manual 31-20-3, Foreign Internal Defense Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Special Forces (20 September 1994) indicates that even when the United States avoids direct participation non-combat missions, it will train others to conduct combat as surrogates: “the primary mission in FID is to organize, train, advise, and improve the tactical and technical proficiency of these forces, so they can defeat the insurgency without direct

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TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5, Force XXI Operations: A Concept for the Evolution of Full-Dimensional Operations for the Strategic Army of the Early Twenty-First Century, Training and Doctrine Command, 1 August 1994.

<sup>189</sup> Of the hundreds of doctrinal publications, training manuals, and pamphlets the U.S. Army published or followed in the 1990s, very few were dedicated to or even mentioned MOOTW. Additionally, those documents that did mention or were dedicated to MOOTW were sure to describe it as a sub-set of or distraction from combat operations.

<sup>190</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 7-98, Operations in a Low-Intensity Conflict, 19 October 1992, p. 1-2.

<sup>191</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-23, Peace Operations, December 1994, p. 86.

U.S. involvement.”<sup>192</sup> The tendency to diminish the importance of MOOTW in favor of combat came naturally and was reasonable given the unlikelihood that failure in any MOOTW contingency during the Cold War would have truly strategic import or effect. The consequences of losing a MOOTW engagement during the Cold War paled in comparison to the possibility of losing an engagement with Soviet forces. Preparation during that period then favored MRC and justifiably so. Thus, historically, the U.S. Army only produced doctrine for MOOTW-like environments when absolute necessity or strategic emphasis dictated; the post-Cold War period was no exception.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 31-20-3, Foreign Internal Defense Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Special Forces, 20 September 1994, p. 1-17.

<sup>193</sup><sup>193</sup> For example, Field Manuals addressing Counterinsurgency Operations or COIN were modified during periods where insurgency or Low Intensity Conflict was deemed a strategic concern of some import: FM 100-5, Operations (modified 1962, '68, '82, '86, '93); FM 100-20 (modified 1964, '67, '72, '74, '90; retitled 3 times (Internal Defense and Development (1964-1972), Low Intensity Conflict (1981), Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict (1990)); FM 31-23, Stability Operations: US Army Doctrine (modified 1967, '72); FM 31-22 U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Forces (modified 1962, '63, '65, '69, '72); FM 31-16, Counterinsurgency Operations (modified 1963, '67, '86 (renumbered as FM 90-8 in 1986). The sheer volume of modifications indicates the difficulty of grappling with the complexity encountered in these operations; the dates indicate periods where these environments posed (to varying degrees) a strategic concern (Vietnam War, Reagan era, post-Cold War). See, Downie, Richard Duncan, *Learning from Conflict: The U.S. Military in Vietnam, el Salvador, and the Drug War*, Praeger, Westport, CT, 1998, pp. 47-53. McClintock correctly identifies that the counterinsurgency era began during the Kennedy Administration and that Kennedy's "fascination with the Special Forces and the idea of American guerrillas meshed neatly with his Cold War view that the small wars of subversion and insurgency on the periphery of the 'Free World' posed the greatest challenge to our national security." McClintock, Michael, *Instruments of Statecraft: U.S. Guerrilla Warfare, Counterinsurgency, and Counterterrorism, 1940-1990*, 2002.

As the post-Cold War international security environment matured, the U.S. Army's operational focus became more, not less, focused on combat, despite contemporary experiences in Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti, and to the detriment of the overall support of strategic doctrine and success.<sup>194</sup> U.S. Army doctrinal guidance to not let MOOTW training and preparation interfere with the primary mission of combat was justified variously: "evidence suggests that infantry forces should not include tasks specifically focused on peace operations in the development of their mission essential tasks lists...infantry forces that remain battle focused and trained to accomplish their wartime mission would be capable to transition quickly and accomplish most of the tasks associated with peace operations"<sup>195</sup>; "while cognizant of the increased demand for land forces at the lower end of the contingency spectrum in the near term, we must remain vigilant of the fundamental role of the Army—to fight and win the Nation's wars as the land component of the joint force"<sup>196</sup>; "at the high end of the crisis continuum is fighting and winning major regional conflicts. This mission is the most stressing requirement for the U.S. military"<sup>197</sup> and; opponents of separate or additional MOOTW training, "are correct in that when an infantry battalion conducts a peacekeeping or other MOOTW mission, rifle squads,

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<sup>194</sup> As Echevarria argues, "the current American way of war focuses principally on defeating the enemy in battle. Its underlying concepts—a polyglot of information-centric theories such as network-centric warfare, rapid decisive operations, and shock and awe—center on 'taking down' an opponent quickly, rather than finding ways to apply military force in the pursuit of broader political aims." See, Echevarria, Antulio J., *Toward an American Way of War*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, March 2004, p. 16.

<sup>195</sup> Reilly, Gregory D., *Peace Operations: A Mission Essential Task?*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1998, pp. 36-37.

<sup>196</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Army Vision 2010*, Washington DC, 1996, p. 6.

<sup>197</sup> Cohen, William S., *Op Cit*.

platoons, companies execute the identical tasks to those required in the execution of their HIC [high-intensity conflict] missions.”<sup>198</sup> So, MOOTW was doubly cursed: deemed of distant second importance to combat and, if not unimportant, then sufficiently prepared for in the course of normal combat training and exercises.

The U.S. Army’s failure to adjust to the post-Cold War international security environment and to the directives of the Clinton Administration was due to a number of conceptual, structural, and cultural reasons. Conceptually, even though the operational environment was changing and threats posed by breakdowns in various Third World locales emerged, the vigilant and constant reminders that the U.S. Army was supposed to focus on MRC ensured that the Army would do just that. Structurally, the U.S. Army was neither constructed nor resourced for conducting MOOTW. The Army’s post-Cold War structure was largely a reduced facsimile of its Cold War structure, based on the corps and division concept of conducting and supporting offensive and defensive combat operations with copious amounts of armor, infantry, and field artillery units. Formations and units designed for combat could not be changed or transformed easily or even with great effort. A sclerotic planning and acquisition system, bureaucratic inertia, congressional ties to lobbyists in the defense community, and equipment designed for combat were unlikely motive forces compelling or even enabling significant training and doctrinal change in the U.S. Army. Culturally, the U.S. Army had a deep seated aversion to MOOTW. The U.S. Army’s experience in Vietnam, a general dislike of operations that did not conform to the ethos of the U.S. Army as a war-fighting unit, and a

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<sup>198</sup> Hamlet, Michael E., *Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT), the Key to Training Combat Forces for the Twenty-First Century*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1999, p. 36.

valiant history of successful operations in true combat environments combined to produce broad objections to MOOTW.

Even near the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, after numerous operational deployments in support of MOOTW,<sup>199</sup> doctrinal publications still doggedly dodged this increasingly important mission: “operations across the full spectrum of conflict with multi-national forces, other governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and private volunteer organizations (PVO) have risen in frequency and importance yet our training doctrine neglects the subject.”<sup>200</sup> And as Ralph Peters concludes, “in the 1990s, our Gulf War was the sole conventional conflict of note. Both lopsided and inconclusive, it confirmed the new military paradigm—the United States is unbeatable on a traditional battlefield—but that battlefield is of declining relevance.”<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> The United States military participated in operations in Northern Iraq, Zaire, Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Somalia, Macedonia, Haiti, Liberia, Central African Republic, Albania, Congo and Gabon, Cambodia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya and Tanzania, Liberia, East Timor, and to various counterdrug operations in Latin America and South America.

<sup>200</sup> Snukis, Thomas J., *Training the Army After Next*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 1999, p. 22.

<sup>201</sup> Peters, Ralph, “Our New Old Enemies,” *Challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically: Can America be Defeated?*, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 1998, p. 215.

### **3.3 POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT, PART III (HIERARCHIES AND NETWORKS)**

Although during the Cold War states had to contend with a variety of networked international criminal and terrorist organizations operating either independently or at the behest of or in collusion with a state, their chief security concerns emanated from other states' power.<sup>202</sup> During the Cold War, power typically manifested in the state's employment of a uniformed armed force and the targeted violence that this force could project. When Cold War era international networks challenged state power, states typically responded with police, paramilitary, or military force to disrupt or destroy their activities. For the most part, states were successful in minimizing the growth and influence of international networks prior to 1991 by exerting traditional forms of state power.<sup>203</sup> As Metz argues, "when power was strictly a factor of tangible resources like money and troops, the state held a distinct advantage."<sup>204</sup> Outside of the major drug and crime networks, few illicit international networks were capable of conducting operations without tacit or direct support from a state. But like that of many, particularly the

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<sup>202</sup> This discussion of networks refers to social networks. "A social network consists of a finite set or sets of actors and the relation or relations defined on them. The presence of relational information is a critical and defining feature of a social network." See, Wasserman, Stanley and Katherine Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 20

<sup>203</sup> Arguably the drug cartels of South America were peer opponents of the states that they operated in but their growth and capacity was kept in at least partial check by internal or external state forces.

<sup>204</sup> Metz, Steven, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Op Cit, p. 13.

most disorderly Third World states, the position and potential of illicit international networks dramatically changed in the relaxed post-Cold War international security environment.<sup>205</sup>

### **3.3.1 Hierarchies and Networks in the post-Cold War International Security Environment**

The rise of internationally-capable networks was not just a symptom of the retreat of the state after the end of the Cold War, it was also a cause. Networks were positioned to take advantage of the tools of globalization in unique ways that the state was not: “the rise of networks means that power is migrating to nonstate actors, who are able to organize into sprawling multi-organizational networks (especially all-channel networks, in which every node is connected to every other node) more readily than can traditional, hierarchical, state actors. Nonstate-actor networks are thought to be more flexible and responsive than hierarchies in reacting to outside developments, and to be better than hierarchies at using information to improve decisionmaking.”<sup>206</sup> As international networks, licit and illicit, grew in size, number and scope, the state and the system of states lost some of its power in directing resources, centralizing the use of force, upholding laws, and controlling the international security environment, particularly in the poorly governed areas of the Third World. This was due in large part to the effects of globalization, and in particular, the “spectacular advances and convergences

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<sup>205</sup> “The growth of these networks is related to the spread of advanced information technologies that allow dispersed groups, and individuals, to conspire and coordinate across considerable distances.” Arquilla, John, David Ronfeldt and Michele Zanini, *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy, Countering the New Terrorism*, Ed. Lesser, Ian, et al, RAND, Santa Monica, 1999, p 45.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid, pp. 45-46.

in computer and communication technology and by the collective economic, political, societal, cultural, and communicative processes.”<sup>207</sup> Networks emerging in the post-Cold War international security environment were capable of seizing and utilizing tools once reserved for state-based organizations in the conduct of their activities, without the consequence of absorbing the roles or responsibilities formally ascribed to and incumbent upon the state apparatus. While the emergence of licit international networks in the post-Cold War environment might have aided states in carrying out functions that were, in the post-Cold War world, largely abandoned by bureaucracies, the emergence of illicit networks challenged the authority of the state and abetted manifold security concerns and dilemmas. Illicit international networks made the post-Cold War international security environment less secure and even more difficult to define in traditional terms. “In essence, what nation-states were faced with during the old global order period was the threat not of shadowy transnational organizations, but rather, that of other, clearly identifiable nation-states. It is supremely ironic that the Cold War now seems like a much safer, much more predictable time.”<sup>208</sup>

In a sense, networks are the antithesis of the hierarchical organizational form favored by centralized states; they tend to lack definable form and distinction, can rapidly generate or dissolve, and have no particular constituency to serve outside of that of the network’s choosing.<sup>209</sup> As Phil Williams notes, “networks are far superior to traditional hierarchies in

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<sup>207</sup> Monge, Peter R. and Noshir S. Contractor, *Op Cit*, p. 4.

<sup>208</sup> Pearlstein, Richard M., *Fatal Future? Transnational Terrorism and the New Global Disorder*, University of Texas Press, Austin, TX, 2004, p. 95.

<sup>209</sup> As Michael Kenney argues, “Organizationally, these enterprises are smaller and flatter than their state competitors, allowing them to disperse information rapidly throughout their network structures when necessary.



terms of organizational effectiveness, especially when it comes to innovation and teamwork...this is hardly surprising since network structures are resistant to disruption and have a degree of resilience that other forms of organization lack.”<sup>210</sup> While hierarchical organizations trend toward adopting bureaucratic ideals that support form and constancy, networked organizations trend away from ideal types and tend to support function and change. And whereas hierarchies try to minimize the effects of change and unpredictable undulations in the external environment, networks exploit these stimuli to gain organizational and operational advantage. Uncertainty is anathema to hierarchical organizations but can be a blessing to networks, particularly illicit networks preferring chaotic and shadowy environments beyond the state’s reach.

Unlike networks, traditional organizational forms, such as hierarchies, “typically try to defend against possible threats through much more conventional mechanisms such as plans, standard operating procedures, professional rules, and informal prescriptions” and these defensive mechanisms can lead to a system that is rigid and less capable of handling the unexpected.<sup>211</sup> Hierarchical organizations are a formal and natural extension of human tendency

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They adapt quickly to law enforcement and military efforts to disrupt their activities, using knowledge, technology, and experience to alter their operations. And they stand outside the rule of law, giving them the freedom to disregard the normative and legalistic constraints that regulate (and slow down) their sovereignty-bound competitors.” See, Kenney, Michael, “The Challenge of Eradicating Transnational Criminal Networks: Lessons from the War on Drugs,” Paper Prepared for Delivery at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 29 August-1 September, 2002, p. 16.

<sup>210</sup> Williams, Phil, “The Nature of Drug-Trafficking Networks,” *Current History*, April 1998, p. 154.

<sup>211</sup> Weick, Karl E. and Kathleen M. Sutcliffe, *Managing the Unexpected: Assuring High Performance in an Age of Complexity*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2001, pp. 78-81.

toward simplification, specialization, and order in the accomplishment of tasks, particularly tasks requiring significant inputs. Networks also reflect a human tendency toward simplification and specialization but tend to be informal in their construction and conduct tasks requiring far fewer inputs. It is the nature of hierarchies to require an organization to function while networks require a function to organize. While it is true that “humans use patterns to order the world and make sense of things in complex situations,”<sup>212</sup> these two types of organizational forms reflect differing expressions of cognitive responses to complexity and uncertainty and patterns in human behavior. Hierarchies are favored by organizations beholden to the state and networks are favored by organizations beholden to seemingly nothing but the absence of the state or any other ordering entity.

### **3.3.2 Order and Disorder**

Maintaining order is a much more difficult task than is creating disorder. This is particularly true in the post-Cold War international security environment where previously geographically constrained networks are no longer limited in their reach by borders and state checks on their power and influence. Order must be enforced while disorder seems to spontaneously erupt from where order is lacking. Much of this condition is due to the information revolution encapsulated by globalization. As Ronfeldt argues, “It seems clear that the information revolution strengthens and favors network forms of organization. The new information and communications technologies—all that make up the Net, the Web, the Grid—are enabling dispersed, often small,

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<sup>212</sup> Kurtz, C.F. and D.J. Snowden, “The New Dynamics of Strategy: Sense-Making in a Complex and Complicated World,” IBM Systems Journal, Volume 42, Number 3, 2003, p. 466.

once-isolated groups and individuals to connect, coordinate, and act conjointly as never before.”<sup>213</sup> While it might be easy to discern the intentions, functions, and contacts of a formal hierarchy like those possessed by a state’s government or military, it is much more difficult to discern the connections and contacts of a network, especially a criminal network since their “sinister connections are invisible or dormant for much of the time.”<sup>214</sup> Many networks have developed or evolved as a response to the retreat of state power or the outright collapse of state authority characteristic of failing and failed states.

Networks inherently create both order and disorder depending on the perspective of the viewer. For a state, networks can be subversive, difficult to track and define, and can thwart the state’s ability to impose rules. For instance, illicit cyberspace networks can avoid detection by state-based organizations simply by rotating IP addresses, using advanced encryption, or by hijacking the legitimate resources and powers contained on state-based servers and storage systems.<sup>215</sup> For a community or sub-state organization, networks create order out of chaos by latticing form and function where none existed before. Networks in Third World countries, where state power has in many cases precipitously receded in the post-Cold War era, tend to form around familial and kinship ties or through tribes in the pursuit of a common goal, function, or end-state. Ronfeldt asserts that “this is true in North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia up into the ‘stans’ of Central Asia. Even modern societies still have tribal cores and

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<sup>213</sup> Ronfeldt, David, *In Search of how Societies Work: Tribes—the First and Forever Form*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, December 2006, p. 9.

<sup>214</sup> Lambe, Patrick, “Terrorism and Social Network Analysis,” Mapping, 2003.

<sup>215</sup> All of these capabilities, paradoxically, were created either by states or organizations working within states.

impulses.”<sup>216</sup> Order does proceed from disorder, and vice versa, but the forms of organization that develop from either depend many times upon the existence or absence of modern state control and influence.

What distinguishes modern societies from the pre-modern societies that arguably exist in many Third World countries is the presence of the constraining and centralizing features of the state where rules, authority, and specialization in function is condoned and encouraged in organizations. Andre Standing contends that “unlike hierarchy...a network can be considered as a rather flat, flexible and informal approach to coordinating social (or specifically criminal) life. A network denotes interconnectedness between essentially independent entities. Rather than via central authority, unity among the parts is achieved by shared objectives or *trust*—the central coordinating mechanism is *mutual dependency* of sorts.”<sup>217</sup> These networks can “be highly structured and enduring in nature or they can be loose, fluid, or amorphous in character, with members coming and going according to particular needs, opportunities, and demands. Some individuals or even small organizations will drift in and out of networks when it is convenient for them to do so.”<sup>218</sup>

The form and existence of networks is many times dictated by their reaction to their environment or their reaction to the presence or absence of state-based organizations and governmental control. In failed states, networks might and many times do fill the roles that the state once played in ordering society. But it is also true that networks might form and exist to

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid, p. 76.

<sup>217</sup> Standing, Andre, “How can Crime be Organized?,” Monograph No. 77, February 2003.

<sup>218</sup> Williams, Phil, “Transnational Criminal Networks,” Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy, Eds. Arquilla, John and David Ronfeldt, Santa Monica, RAND, 2001, p. 69.

exploit the absence of the ordering tendencies of states and they thus prove to be a highly disruptive force, not only in the host state but regionally and in the international security environment as a whole. As will be examined in later chapters, this was true in many Third World states in the post-Cold War period and would prove to be of significant importance to the direction of U.S. strategy and the consequential organizational adaptation of the U.S. Army following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and throughout OIF.

### **3.4 CONCLUSIONS**

In 1992, John Lewis Gaddis wrote of the unique integrating and disintegrating conditions that the United States faced in the post-Cold War international security environment, “for the first time in over half a century, no single great power, or coalition of powers, poses a ‘clear and present danger’ to the national security of the United States. The end of the Cold War has left Americans in the fortunate position of being without an obvious major adversary, and that—given the costs of confronting adversaries who have been all too obvious since the beginning of World War II—is a condition worthy of greater appreciation than it has so far received.”<sup>219</sup> But Gaddis warned that the United States’ position of security, newly found in the absence of the Soviet Union, would have consequences: “unfortunately, however, the forces of integration are not the only ones active in the world: there are also forces of fragmentation at work that are resurrecting old barriers between nations and peoples—and creating new ones—even as others

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<sup>219</sup> Gaddis, John Lewis, *The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations*, Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 193.

are tumbling. Some of these forces have begun to show unexpected strength, just when it looked as though integration was about to prevail.”<sup>220</sup> Implementing policies and strategies based on this duality-laced vision of the post-Cold War was thus a difficult proposition. The United States would have to ensure flexibility and adaptability in the organizations charged with handling the country’s new found prominence in a world where traditional power dynamics and forces were in flux. The management of post-Cold War change would in large part be influenced by how the United States chose to respond to this environment and how it would array its military capabilities to ensure stability as the country approached the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Perhaps the constraining features and dynamics of the Cold War and popular theories of how to operate in a bi-polar, state-centric world were too powerful to overcome in the post-Cold War era. As Peter Clerks contends, “The preconceived ideas that we hold about social phenomena shape the things we see, and subsequently what we perceive influences what we do about it. No perception is possible without a theory behind it.”<sup>221</sup> Despite disintegration in the Third World, population concentration in urban areas, the rise of illicit, adaptive, and networked organizations, and a force much leaner on personnel, the U.S. Army decided to entertain a vision leading to the creation of a less adaptive organization: a technologically capable, hierarchical, combat-oriented force more attuned to state-based, Cold War enemies than to the amorphous, networked, and less than identifiable threats of the post-Cold War era. While internationally disposed networks were slowly rising like phoenixes out of the ashes of Third World sovereignty

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid, p. 198.

<sup>221</sup> Klerks, Peter, “The Network Paradigm Applied to Criminal Organisations: Theoretical Nitpicking or a Relevant Doctrine for Investigators? Recent Developments in the Netherlands,” *Connections*, Volume 24, No. 3, 2001, p. 55.

and boundaries, the U.S. Army was developing a tightly controlled, hierarchical combat force almost exclusively dedicated to an included but lesser threat to post-Cold War international stability: the state.

The development of this force and the doctrine to support it was neither irrational nor impossible to understand, even with the focused and discerning vision offered by the all-knowing spectacles of hindsight, but it was nonetheless constraining. Creating a force armed with singularly focused capabilities and the doctrine to support those capabilities does not lend to the potential for adaptation; in fact, and in this instance, the likelihood of and capacity for adaptation significantly decreased. The choices that policymakers and U.S. Army leadership made in the 1990s created a highly trained yet static tool for responding to a rapidly changing international security environment. Ascribing adaptability to this force, overly prejudiced for a single function, constricted the range of choices and changes that the U.S. Army would be able to make in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Large organizations with massive budgets, sclerotic resourcing, constrained mission sets, and a highly focused pool of personnel adapt but do not adapt quickly.<sup>222</sup> As J. Bowyer Bell argues, “A prepared mind flexible, familiar with the actual asymmetries of the real and perceived, coupled with experience in both the existing system and the history of the unconventional, offers the most effective preparation. Too much dogma, too much set doctrine, too many orthodox assumptions extrapolated into fashioning a model for all

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<sup>222</sup> General Chiarelli argues that “the POM [Program Objective Memorandum] process, the system that we have for bringing new weapons systems on, is an industrial age system that basically says that for requirements you can forecast 12 years out from the time that you are going to field a piece of equipment, you are able to write a requirement that delivers 12 years this piece of equipment that gets you where you want to be at that particular point in time.” General Chiarelli, Peter, Telephone Interview, 27 October 2008.

eventualities not only assures a flawed response but also reassures that America can each and every time react in a cunningly calculated, carefully calibrated commitment of tangible resources in a conflict that is a matter of perception that takes place in an environment shaped by ideas and conviction beyond easy reach.”<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Bell, J. Bowyer, *Dragonwars: Armed Struggle & the Conventions of Modern War*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1999, pp. 419-420.



#### 4.0 CLEAVAGE AND CRITICAL JUNCTURE: SETTING THE CONDITIONS AND POTENTIAL FOR ADAPTATION IN OIF

*“All human situations have their inconveniences. We feel those of the present but neither see nor feel those of the future; and hence we often make troublesome changes without amendment, and frequently for the worse”*—Benjamin Franklin

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the international security environment had grown increasingly foreign and complex. Familiar challengers to U.S. global and regional hegemony (Russia and China) were still present and were transforming for the post-Cold War world while alternative forms of governance emerged in Afghanistan, in the tattered failed state of Somalia, and in various Third World and transition country enclaves and cities. Terrorism, as a tool and as a *raison d’etre* for various internationally-capable organizations, materialized and manifested in deed in the first World Trade Center bombing (1993), the Embassy Bombings in Tanzania and Kenya (1998), and in the bombing of the USS Cole (2000). Additionally, Pakistan threatened an already unstable South and Southwest Asia with its first nuclear weapons test (1998) while North Korea expanded its missile program in that same year.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Munck and de Silva argue that the “plethora of conflicts that have emerged or continue to fester in the aftermath of the Cold War” requires that a range of actors “come to terms with the growing problems of political violence and armed conflicts.” See Munch, Ronaldo and Purnaka L. de Silva, Political Violence, Identity Formation

In parallel to these events, the U.S. Army was busily implementing its program for addressing the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Transformation. The Army's transformative effort began with the conceptual development of Force XXI (networked battlefield systems and digitization) in 1993, continued with the digitization/modernization of a portion of 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (4<sup>th</sup> ID) in 1994, was expanded with the AAN project, and culminated, at least on an interim basis, in the creation of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> (with more following) Stryker Brigade Combat Teams (SBCTs) at Fort Lewis, WA. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division and later the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division were selected as the units to lead the Transformation process. "The Army selected the 3d Brigade of the 2d Infantry Division to serve as the vanguard of Shinseki's effort to make the Army more lethal but also more responsive, deployable, and sustainable than it had ever been. The program had as its immediate goal the production of a medium-weight force to bridge the gap between easily deployable light units and their heavier counterparts that required significantly more time and resources to reposition."<sup>225</sup> The SBCT represented an actualization of the prevailing concept of future warfare where

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and Peacemaking in Comparative Perspective, St. Martin's Press, New York, 2000, p. 245. The post-Cold War international security environment was increasingly characterized by unconventional and unpredictable outbreaks of violence at the low and high end of the conflict spectrum. Paul Smith argues that in the absence of specially created agencies and organizations to address transnational issues, military leaders would have to prepare to confront these threats. See, Smith, Paul J., *Op Cit*, p. 88. Part of this response was the U.S. Army's pursuit of Transformation and the creation of the Objective Force, even if this force was constituted on largely conventional premises.

<sup>225</sup> Reardon, Mark J. and Jeffrey A. Charlston, *From Transformation to Combat: The First Stryker Brigade at War*, Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington DC, 2007, p. 4.

intelligence capacity illuminated the battlefield and helped direct overwhelming firepower and did so with a force that was lighter and less manpower intensive than legacy units.<sup>226</sup>

As the U.S. Army was transforming forces that were arguably more lethal and deployable, the international security environment was becoming less responsive to these capabilities. Actual and potential adversaries were realizing that faults existed in the combat-heavy, conventionally oriented forces that the U.S. Army fielded to counter unconventional enemies. As Andrew Bacevich argues regarding Mohammed Aided and Radovan Karadzic, “no doubt they respect the U.S. military establishment for its formidable strengths. They are also shrewd enough to circumvent those strengths and to exploit the vulnerabilities inherent in the rigid U.S. adherence to professional conventions regarding the use of force.”<sup>227</sup> Many of the adversaries emerging in the post-Cold War era not only didn’t challenge the U.S. Army

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<sup>226</sup> In 1996, a student at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College presciently discerned weaknesses in the Force XXI concept insofar as this concept was premised on an intelligence picture that was unlikely obtainable in an unconventional warfare (UW) environment and relied on the accurate delivery of munitions against dispersed and cellular forces: “Unfortunately, the characteristics of a UW force seem to negate many of the capabilities upon which the concept [Force XXI] is based. Against an urban-based, cellular UW force locating discrete, critical targets will be difficult. It will be particularly difficult to locate sufficient numbers of targets simultaneously, so that their destruction can paralyze the UW force; rather, operations will tend to be incremental, time consuming and indecisive. Finally, Force XXI is a low manpower, high firepower force designed to defeat an opponent whose center of gravity is his military. Its ability to transition to manpower intensive presence and security operations to counter a UW force, whose center of gravity is popular support is questionable.” See, Tovo, Kenneth E., Force XXI Versus an Unconventional Warfare Threat, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 19 April 1996, p. 37.

<sup>227</sup> Bacevich, Andrew J., “The Limits of Orthodoxy: The Use of Force After the Cold War,” The United States and the use of Force in the Post-Cold War Era, The Aspen Institute, Washington DC, 1995, p. 185.

conventionally, they couldn't, and in the case of Somalia and later in Afghanistan and Iraq, did not need to. Anthony Zinni contends that the U.S. military resisted making adjustments in doctrine, organization, training and equipment throughout the 1990s and remained fundamentally constructed for the Cold War period, albeit with some "evolutionary modernization for certain capabilities."<sup>228</sup>

By the very nature of large bureaucratic organizations, the U.S. Army was not well disposed to making changes that significantly broke from its conventional moorings despite recent experience and evidence that the international security environment was in disarray. As Chris Demchak and Patrick Allen argue, "just as the Army leadership is not demonstrating the will or understanding to encourage change agents, they show less understanding of the technologies they intend to acquire...the Army's history with innovative organizations is not encouraging. The leadership has consistently shown a tendency to attempt to shove new technologies into older organizational structures. When they have not done so, they have also shown a gross misunderstanding of the technology-human mesh, and innovative organizations have not fared well as a result."<sup>229</sup> Not only was the U.S. Army misunderstanding the

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<sup>228</sup> Zinni, Anthony C., A Military for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Lessons from the Recent Past, Strategic Forum No. 181, National Defense University, July 2001.

<sup>229</sup> Demchak, Chris C. and Patrick D. Allen, "Technology and Complexity: The Modern Military's Capacity for Change," Transforming Defense, Ed. Conrad Crane, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, December 2001, p. 114. Wray Johnson argues a similar point, "the US military's conventional heritage and predisposition will remain intact and drive decisions affecting doctrine, force structure and readiness and, therefore, affect the Armed Forces' ability to effectively conduct OOTW missions. A corollary position is that effective employment of general-purpose US forces in OOTW can be achieved through conceptual innovation." See, Johnson, Wray R., Op Cit, p. 68.

technology-human mesh amongst its own units, it did not understand the mesh of its technology with the human elements of the environments that it was increasingly encountering. As Charles Krulak explains, “modern crisis responses are exceedingly complex endeavors. In Bosnia, Haiti, and Somalia the unique challenges of *military operations other than war* (MOOTW) were combined with the disparate challenges of mid-intensity conflict.”<sup>230</sup> The sensors, reconnaissance, target acquisition, weapons, and communications capabilities engendered in the SBCT and the Transformation effort would not, alone or in concert, assist in making sense of increasingly complex environments dominated by civilians and combatants who did not wear uniforms or follow the Geneva Conventions. A doctrinal and institutional shift was necessary for this kind of change but was not forthcoming.

Compounding the U.S. Army’s fundamental inability to adjust to new threats and circumstances was the fact that states and non-state actors were adapting, in particular, to the strengths of the U.S. military establishment. Thomas Mahnken argues that “although some states may emulate U.S. military practices, others are likely to develop innovative approaches to achieve their political objectives. Strategies designed to negate the effectiveness or to exploit the weaknesses of high-technology forces may be especially appealing to states lacking the means to compete head-to-head with the United States.”<sup>231</sup> This was likely for non-state forces as well. Additionally, Mahnken argues, traditional measures of military power have focused on weaponry to the exclusion of various qualitative factors including training and doctrine. This focus has

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<sup>230</sup> Krulak, Charles C. “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War,” *Marines Magazine*, January 1999.

<sup>231</sup> Mahnken, Thomas G., *Uncovering Ways of War: U.S. Intelligence and Foreign Military Innovation, 1918-1941*, Cornell University Press, London, 2002, p. 177.

produced “wildly inaccurate predictions of combat outcomes.”<sup>232</sup> While the SBCT and the Objective Force concept did represent modest change in response to the post-Cold War international security environment in terms of equipment and organization, it also reflected an institutional bias favoring the familiar over the innovative and the quantitative over the qualitative. Institutional preference persisted in the types of forces and skills, training, and doctrine that were used in the development of the SBCT and the Objective Force and thus impeded any true organizational change.<sup>233</sup>

Creating the SBCT to be more deployable and responsive without a true enemy in mind ensured that previous concepts would be overlaid onto this new organization in an attempt to give it refined definition and purpose. As Vertzberger explains, “problems that are ill defined are also poorly understood” and when faced with an ill-defined problem decision-makers will “unconsciously transform ill-defined problems into well-defined ones by ignoring indeterminate attributes.”<sup>234</sup> The U.S. Army, through the SBCT and Objective Force concept, was being redefined into a medium-weight conventional force to fight an ill-defined adversary with existing doctrine and weapons platforms. The only ostensible change that the SBCT made to the existing

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid, p. 177.

<sup>233</sup> As Sarkesian argues, “Whatever the organizational strategies contemplated, the fundamental problem of integrating American capabilities rests not solely or primarily with organizational restructuring, but with conceptual synthesis.” The U.S. Army, under the direction of General Shinseki, had difficulty synthesizing the idea of the SBCT within the existing, larger organizational structure. See Sarkesian, Sam C., *Organizational Strategy and Low-Intensity Conflicts*, Special Operations in US Strategy, Eds. Barnett, Frank, et al, NDU Press, Washington DC, 1984, p. 286.

<sup>234</sup> Vertzberger, Yaacov, Y.I., *Risk Taking and Decisionmaking: Foreign Military Intervention Decisions*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1998, pp. 31-33.

force was a supposed deployment and redeployment capability combined with greater intelligence acquisition hardware than existed in a legacy brigade. It was assumed that the SBCT, like its infantry and armored counterparts, would participate in operations that would be rapid and decisive, not prolonged and inconclusive, and would be aided by an omniscient intelligence apparatus.<sup>235</sup> Thus, the SBCT was developed with little regard to evolving threats and the post-Cold War international security environment but with high regard for long held beliefs, organizational dogmatism, newly available capabilities, and emergent technologies. As John Nagl asserts, “perhaps the most serious asymmetric threat to U.S. national security is the organizational culture of the Department of Defense and of its component services. Accustomed to mirror-imaging and to creating a national security apparatus to defeat the threats which we see and understand, the Department of Defense continues to be held in thrall to the Iron Triangle of Congress, the Services, and the defense industry, devoting resources to countering future symmetrical threats which we already overmatch while devoting insufficient resources to emerging asymmetrical threats.”<sup>236</sup> Additionally, Nagl argues that “today [2001], America’s

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<sup>235</sup> Blank argues that the United States defines its “conduct of war in its entirety as the model against which others should be measured” and that the United States also claims “that the model of contemporary operations is or should be one where rapid operations leading to a decisive end are essential and indispensable attribute of victory.” Blank also states that enemies like as Qaeda present “immense cognitive barriers to understanding which no technology can fully erase.” See, respectively, Blank, Stephen J., *Rethinking Asymmetric threats*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, September 2003, p. 18 and p. 22.

<sup>236</sup> Nagl, John A., *Asymmetric Threats to U.S. National Security to the Year 2010*, U.S. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2001, p. 58.

means of security are being regulated by a remembered threat, and not by the one she is likely to face for the next decade.”<sup>237</sup>

Familiar concepts and derivations from these concepts, like Rapid Decisive Operations or RDO, pervaded the Transformation project and dovetailed well with the strategy developed after the attacks of 11 September 2001.<sup>238</sup> “The RDO concept aimed at enabling the military instrument to respond quickly with smaller, more lethal forces to bring regional conflict threatening U.S. interests to a rapid and decisive close. Its central operational framework—effects based operations—integrated the application of precision engagement, information operations, theater enablers, and dominant maneuver to produce a relentless series of multidimensional raids, strikes, and ground assaults throughout the battlespace...RDO became the rallying point for the Army’s march into the future. It pervaded military thinking, equipment

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid, p. 77.

<sup>238</sup> McMaster describes the development of RDO and the associated concept of Effects-Based Operations (EBO): “a team comprised mainly of contractors used JV 2010 as the basis for their efforts. They viewed the possibilities associated with information as the basis for new operational concepts. That vision of future war took shape under two complementary concepts: Rapid Decisive Operations (RDO) and Effects-Based Operations (EBO). Their names were inherently persuasive; criticism might be misconstrued as advocacy for ‘Ponderous Indecisive Operations’ or ‘Randomly Generated Violence.” McMaster, H.R., *Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War*, Op Cit., p. 73. Shortly after the commencement of OIF, Batschelet argued that incorporating EBO into the force was very difficult given the linear training and planning regimen used by the U.S. Army: “the current approach to leader training focused too much on process to the detriment of outcome. Battle drills, situational lane training and rote teaching of the military MDMP all contribute to the development of leaders who are able to apply proven, but limited responses to battlefield realities.” This contention proved even more true in post-combat Iraq. See Batschelet, Allen W., “Effects-Based Operations for Joint Warfighters,” *Field Artillery*, May-June 2003.



procurement, unit redesign, and force structure decisions regarding combat support and service support units.”<sup>239</sup> RDO would enable the Bush Administration to form a strategy premised on the capability to quickly topple a state’s government, defeat its forces, or to dismember a hostile organization functioning on its soil. As for any stabilization of these de-stabilized areas, RDO neither offered a response nor a solution. The capabilities-based Transformation effort relied on enhanced combat capabilities to accomplish the combat portions of post-9/11 military strategy but did so at the expense of the stability that it purportedly would help to produce. There was little recognition at the time that the U.S. Army’s Transformation program, instituted allegedly to enhance full-spectrum dominance and achieve strategic goals, was contributing to an institutionalized inability to provide stability and translate battlefield success into political victory.

Only one side of the Transformation program was ever emphasized: the ability to get more lethal forces to contingencies faster and with a smaller logistical footprint.<sup>240</sup> Choosing

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<sup>239</sup> Watson, Brian G., Reshaping the Expeditionary Army to Win Decisively: The Case for Greater Stabilization Capacity in the Modular Force, Strategic Studies Institute, August 2005, p. 4.

<sup>240</sup> Reductions in unit size disproportionately affect the staffing and thus planning and resourcing capacity of headquarters units. “While the U.S. Army has had many structural changes in its history, one constant that pervades the forces the Army designs institutionally is that the operational warfighting headquarters are inherently understaffed to accomplish the missions to which they are assigned. Many factors such as personnel strength, budgetary considerations, and technology influence Army structural design, but primary among these many factors in designing new forces should be warfighting capabilities. However, too often personnel and budgetary considerations outweigh those critical warfighting headquarters’ capabilities in building unit and force designs.” For example, “currently, as operations in both OEF and OIF continue, as well as support to Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), the CENTCOM staff is authorized 1395 personnel, is manned at 1599, and still

this capability necessarily meant sacrificing other capabilities and thus reducing options for adaptation at the strategic and tactical levels. “The Army must continually validate its choices against a healthy respect for the shadow of the future. Choices now severely constrain future capabilities. This is true with regard to choices of weapon systems and equipment. It is also true with regard to the nature of recruitment, training, and development that will grow the strategic leaders of tomorrow’s Army from the junior members of today’s profession.”<sup>241</sup> Through Transformation, the U.S. Army had made its choice and did so based on organizational characteristics amenable to fighting against a familiar force on a battlefield that was well-known throughout the Cold War. Arreguin-Toft argues that strong actors struggle with smaller, arguably weaker, adversaries because strong actors are constituted to fight other strong actors and shifting focus is costly and difficult.<sup>242</sup> The U.S. Army’s singularly conventionally-oriented modernization program would become increasingly narrowed through the process of Transformation; the costs of adapting in future conflict would be severe.

This chapter will examine the foundation of the U.S. Army’s Transformation program; demonstrate how this program was not really a transformation but instead the inculcation of new capabilities into old structures laden with old doctrine; assess the effects of the Bush Doctrine, OEF, and Transformation post-9/11 and; will argue that these events helped to make the U.S.

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requires 962 augmentees to conduct operations for the GWOT.” Siltman, Frank J., Too Thin on Top: The Under-Resourcing of Headquarters in Force Design, USAWC Strategy Research Project, Carlisle, PA, 15 March 2006, pp.1 and p. 11, respectively.

<sup>241</sup> Lacquement, Richard A., Army Professional Expertise and Jurisdictions, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, October 2003, p. 26.

<sup>242</sup> Arreguin-Toft, Ivan, How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict, Cambridge University Press, UK, 2005, pp. 219-223.

Army less adaptive and less capable of achieving full-spectrum dominance as it prepared for OIF.

#### **4.1 TRANSFORMATION, PRE 9/11**

Any attempt to transform an organization and to institutionalize flexibility and the qualities of adaptation defies bureaucratic and organizational tendencies. R.W. Komer examined organizational actions and performance in Vietnam and found that training, incentive systems, and conformity to bureaucratic norms all derail attempts to develop organizational flexibility.<sup>243</sup> Part of the problem with conducting organizational change, no matter how modest or incremental, is that the decisions made are usually premised on successive choices made in the past and are held hostage to a larger framework that is not directly part of the change taking place.<sup>244</sup> The organizational change brought by the U.S. Army's Transformation program, even if partially appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in its own right, was inhibited by doctrine, concepts,

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<sup>243</sup> Komer, R.W., *Bureaucracy Does its Thing: Institutional Constraints on U.S.-GVN Performance in Vietnam*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, August 1972, pp. 152-156.

<sup>244</sup> Lindblom notes that trouble with change is that "most of us approach policy problems within a framework given by our view of a chain of successive policy choices made up to the present." See Lindblom, Charles E., "The Science of 'Muddling Through'," *Public Administration Review*, Volume 19, No. 2, Spring, 1959, p. 88.

planning formats, equipment, and other existing organizations established for a different environment and to compete against different enemies.<sup>245</sup>

Even under the most auspicious circumstances and in the most predictable environments, the overarching architecture of the U.S. Army would have a significant and restraining effect on any transformative effort in smaller and subordinate units. Additionally, it is unlikely that any transformative effort would be capable of creating a wholly appropriate force based on organization, occupational specialty, and equipment alone. This was as true for forces in World War II and the Cold War as it was for forces in the post-Cold War period.<sup>246</sup> Transforming in a world where enemies other than states were superficially defined, at best, was a difficult if not impossible task and would likely result in forces that retained linear projections of legacy organizational characteristics.

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<sup>245</sup> Indeed, another significant source of inhibition is officer attitudes towards change. In their 2000 survey of officer attitudes towards transformation and the RMA, Mahnken and Fitzsimmons point out that many U.S. Army officers were skeptical of any need for the force to change radically. Certainly, if a significant percentage of the officer corps doubts that there is need for radical change then they are less likely to take the steps necessary to institutionalize change and to spawn innovations within changing organizations. See, Mahnken, Thomas G., and James R. Fitzsimmons, *The Limits of Transformation: Officer Attitudes toward the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Naval War College, Newport, RI, 2000, p. 108.

<sup>246</sup> Rosen argues that in a possible war with the Soviet Union, some U.S. forces would have been “inappropriate for the realities of combat.” See Rosen, Stephen Peter, *Winning the Next War*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1991, p. 261.

Metz posits that historically, transformation would come either from direct and persistent intervention by political masters or through battlefield defeat.<sup>247</sup> Neither of these conditions necessarily prevailed upon the U.S. Army as it pursued its Transformation agenda and thus, true transformation did not emerge. Additionally, environmental considerations and likely adversaries seemed to play only a secondary role in U.S. Army Transformation. The predominant concern of Transformation appeared to be the incorporation of technological capabilities into a more deployable force constrained in personnel and equipment apportionment. The SBCT was designed to operate with lighter, more mobile vehicles, fewer personnel than typical of a light or armored brigade, and sensors and intelligence fusion capabilities that promised to make the unit practically all-knowing. Despite claims to the contrary, even if the SBCT were to achieve the situational awareness promised by information age technological capabilities, situational awareness does not necessarily present as situational understanding, does not bestow predictive capacity and intent discernment, and does not allow for the protagonist in the conflict to act in a time, place, and manner of its choosing; the enemy, no matter the form, has a vote in how any situation develops and is understood. Assuming this capability in the face of a similarly structured adversary is optimistic; against a crude yet wily unconventional threat organization, this premise is chimerical.

One of the assumptions underlying the SBCT concept was that training for combat operations and the application of force were conditionally sufficient actions for handling contingencies in MOOTW environments. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, little additional preparation was deemed necessary for missions in complex or MOOTW environments

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<sup>247</sup> Metz, Steven, *Armed Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Information Revolution and Post-Modern Warfare*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, April 2000, p. 94.

other than standard unit training on combat tasks. Another assumption pertaining to the design of the SBCT was that technological superiority would provide an intelligence picture that increased unit survivability in hostile environments. A third assumption was that strategic flexibility was warranted and required as the United States would need to bounce from one contingency to another as necessity dictated. A final assumption was that future conflicts would be decided quickly and, by extension, protracted warfare was either unlikely or could be precluded by the quick and massive application of combat power. General Eric Shinseki highlighted this last assumption in his testimony before the Senate in 2000, “at present, in some instances, we face strategic deployment challenges that inhibit our ability to negotiate rapidly the transitions from peacetime operations in one part of the world to small-scale contingencies or warfights in another. We must provide more flexibility...we must change...The Army’s Transformation Strategy will result in an Objective Force that is more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable than the present force. Thus, The Army has determined to transform itself to gain strategic flexibility and to become strategically dominant at every point on the spectrum of operations.”<sup>248</sup> Through Shinseki’s Transformation the U.S. Army would be ‘strategically’ flexible, full spectrum dominant, and lethal; essentially, a smaller,

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<sup>248</sup> Shinseki, Eric K., Statement Before the Airland Subcommittee, Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, On the Army Transformation, 8 March 2000. Bates and Warrender argue that “the Army’s aging Cold War infrastructure was designed as a heavy obstacle to Soviet armor in Europe. In a 21<sup>st</sup> Century threat environment, ground forces need to be more mobile, survivable, fully-aware and lethal.” See Bates, Scott and Zachary Warrender, *Agility Across the Spectrum: A Future Force Blueprint*, Center for National Policy, December 2008, p. 24.

and more quickly deployable force capable of achieving the same purpose as its light and heavy counterparts and mirroring their conventional structures and compositions.<sup>249</sup>

In 2002, Shinseki was more detailed in explaining his plans for Transformation and argued how this program, with the creation of the SBCTs and the future Objective Force, would engage future enemies: “applied immediately, technological innovations can provide battlefield advantage, particularly when they facilitate or complement new ways to conduct war.”<sup>250</sup> The technological innovations the SBCT concept relied upon and that would form the basis of the Objective Force would enable, at the tactical level, Objective Force units to “*see first, understand first, act first and finish decisively as the means to tactical success*. Operations will be characterized by developing situations out of contact; maneuvering to positions of advantage; engaging enemy forces beyond the range of their weapons; destroying them with precision fires; and, as required by tactical assault at times and places of our choosing.”<sup>251</sup> Shinseki did give the obligatory nod to the two major theater conflict requirement but added that the U.S. Army must “remain sufficiently versatile and agile to handle smaller-scale contingencies which will occur

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<sup>249</sup> The RIF seemed to either force or complement this mindset and concept of operations insofar as units were smaller and thus could be deployed faster and with less logistical footprint. As Murray explains, “Exacerbating the Army’s difficulties in adjusting to its new role has been dealing with the difficult problems associated with the major downsizing of its forces.” Certainly the RIF was problematic but judging by Shinseki’s vision of a smaller, networked, agile and deployable force, the U.S. Army would benefit from a smaller force. See Murray, Williamson, “Introduction,” *Army Transformation: a View from the U.S. Army War College*, Ed. Murray, Williamson, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 2001, p. 2-3.

<sup>250</sup> Shinseki, Eric K., *Concepts for the Objective Force*, U.S. Army White Paper, October 2002, p. 2.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6.

more often, presenting unique challenges.”<sup>252</sup> Like the vast majority of projections from the end of the Cold War until the creation of the SBCTs, Shinseki’s formulations assumed that, even in smaller-scale contingencies, combat and engagement with weapons platforms would be the primary objective and means of U.S. Army forces *and* threat agencies. Little if any serious mention was made of the challenges posed by actors other than states or state-based forces.<sup>253</sup>

The SBCT did not have any doctrine specifically designed for its operations at its inception and much of the doctrine forthcoming was based on existing, traditional light and armored targeting, maneuver, and combat concepts.<sup>254</sup> Field Manual 6-20-10, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) for the Targeting Process, describes a process that can only clearly be related to traditional combat and not to MOOTW environments: types of fires (harassing, suppression, neutralization, destruction); target selection standards (accuracy requirements, size of enemy activity (point or area)); the synchronization of combat power and; the status of activity (moving or stationary).<sup>255</sup> Field Manual 3-0, Operations, printed in June

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>253</sup> This was reflected in doctrine: “Today, potential adversaries rely on land-based military and paramilitary forces to retain power, coerce and control their populations, and extend influence beyond their borders.” Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations, June 2001, p. 1-2.

<sup>254</sup> Doctrine made clear that no other type of focus was necessary: “the Army’s warfighting focus produces a full spectrum force that meets the needs of joint force commanders (JFCs) in war, conflict, and peace.” Ibid, p. 1-3.

<sup>255</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 6-20-10, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for the Targeting Process, Washington DC, 8 May 1996. Paul Yingling argues that “the targeting process described in FM 6-20-10 is focused on a battlefield that is conventional, linear and mechanized” but the United States found itself engaged in operations confronting non-state actors on non-linear battlefields. See, Yingling, Paul L., Using the



2001 indicates that the purpose of the Army (and thus the SBCT) was to organize, train, and equip “its forces to fight and win the nation’s wars and achieve directed national objectives. Fighting and winning the nation’s wars is the foundation of Army service.”<sup>256</sup> Field Manual FM 3-90, Tactics, printed in July 2001 states that “the tactical level of war is the level of war at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces. Activities at this level focus on the ordered arrangement and maneuver of combat elements in relation to each other and to the enemy to achieve combat objectives.”<sup>257</sup> Field Manual 7-0, Training the Force, published in 2002, continues with the same doctrinal conflation of combat and MOOTW tasks and skills that pervaded post-Cold War doctrine, “battle focused training is training on wartime tasks. Many of the METL [Mission Essential Task List] tasks that a unit trains on for its wartime mission are the same as required for a stability operation or support operation that they might execute.”<sup>258</sup> *If* the SBCT was implicitly capable of operating in MOOTW environments there was little institutional or conceptual support for training and planning for these environments. The doctrine that the SBCT would have to use or build upon was decidedly combat-oriented and provided only scant instruction or guidance for operations or planning in MOOTW.<sup>259</sup>

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Targeting Process to Synchronize Information Operations at the Tactical Level, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2002, pp. 12-13.

<sup>256</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-0, Operations, June 2001, p. 1-2.

<sup>257</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-90, Tactics, July 2001, p. 1-2.

<sup>258</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 7-0, Training the Force, October 2002, P. 2-8.

<sup>259</sup> Notably, the Combat Training Centers (CTCs), particularly the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, LA, because of deployment experiences in the 1990, did “focus on guerilla and counter-guerilla tactics, techniques, and procedures. This involved operating with indigenous or partisan forces and replicated some of the

Although the SBCT was designed and staffed to act as a possible Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters capable of planning and executing broad mission sets, few changes were made for decision making and planning in other than combat environments. No significant changes were made to the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) since the end of the Cold War although the threat environment was perceptibly altered. Chief in the assumptions of the MDMP is that decisions and planning will be made in a time-constrained environment similar to that which prevails under combat conditions.<sup>260</sup> Temporally, the planning required in a combat environment can be and often times is radically different than that required in a complex MOOTW environment where operations might be lengthy and continuous rather than short, intense, and discrete. As FM 101-5, Staff Organization and Operations, states, the “*disadvantage* of using the complete MDMP is that it is a time-consuming process”; lengthy planning timelines were not considered part of regular tactical decision making and most planning exercises and training assumed a time-constrained environment. Thus, planning for non-linear, extended, and complex MOOTW environments was typically not exercised and when it was, the prevailing assumption was that the planning cycle should be linear, sequential, and phased from pre-combat to post-combat activities. The increased information flows inherent to the networked forces of the SBCT combined with complex, unorthodox environments and actors required a distributed

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demands of what is now called irregular warfare.” Brigadier General McMaster, H. R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008. This development was not well reflected in official doctrine or in home-station training.

<sup>260</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 101-5, Staff Organization and Operations, Washington DC, 31 May 1997, P. 5-1.

decision making system that defied the linear MDMP.<sup>261</sup> Tools (such as video teleconferencing, networking, and satellite communications) were available for distributed decision making and planning but the doctrine and processes required for this were largely absent.

Innovation, even in the new SBCT, was difficult to arouse. Training, derived from doctrinal guidance, was highly structured and based on the Task, Conditions, and Standards model prepared for and perfected during the Cold War.<sup>262</sup> These doctrinal tasks were almost strictly combat-oriented and reflected the highly conventional bias of the U.S. Army. The Task, Conditions, Standards model compelled units to train to a standard that produced reflexivity regardless of the conditions imposed. This model worked well when applied to the conventional threats that pervaded the international security environment during the Cold War but were inadequate when preparing for threats (such as those in a complex low- or mid-intensity environment) that the tasks did not address. Despite a changing international security environment the preponderance of U.S. Army tasks, derived from conventional mission sets, remained oriented on combat and on subduing armed and uniformed foes.

When unconventional missions were ordered, the U.S. Army would prepare units for deployment with Mission Readiness Exercises (MREs) tailored to the particular mission that the deploying unit was expected to execute. Upon redeployment, these units would return to conducting combat-focused training on tasks designed for deterring or defeating conventional

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<sup>261</sup> See discussion of MDMP in the information age in, Littlefield, Thomas K., *The Military Decision Process—Overlooked by the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 1998, pp. 15-20.

<sup>262</sup> I would like to express thanks to Major General (Ret.) Robert Scales for his insights regarding the U.S. Army's system for training and education and the relevance of both in the post-Cold War period.

adversaries.<sup>263</sup> Interestingly, when units returned from MOOTW missions, they were considered unprepared for combat operations as measured by Unit Status Reporting (USR) guidelines premised on a fairly conventional set of tasks. Apparently, combat and MOOTW missions did not exercise the same skills, as U.S. Army doctrine stated, and the two shared few if any transitive properties.

Although general training focused on conventional combat, the U.S. Army had been “operating in very complex state building and peace enforcement mission environments like the Balkans, and also with a large security sector reform project in Bosnia and Kosovo.”<sup>264</sup> And although these experiences and the knowledge from these experiences were retained throughout the U.S. Army, chiefly in the tacit, experiential knowledge of the participants, they were only exploited on a case by case basis as the need arose or as mission circumstance dictated. Notable exceptions to this rule were “less than formal” doctrinal publications that emerged from units producing after action reviews or reports detailing experiences and practices in Somalia, Haiti, and the Balkans.<sup>265</sup> Significant departures from doctrinal guidance and set tasks were unlikely and found disfavor. As U.S. Army Field Manual 7-1, Battle Focused Training, explains, “Training must be done to the Army standard and conform to Army doctrine. When mission tasks involve emerging doctrine or non-standard tasks, commanders establish the tasks, conditions, and standards using mission orders and guidance, lessons learned from similar operations, and their professional judgment. The next higher commander approves the standards

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<sup>263</sup> I would like to thank Colonel Richard Lacquement for his thoughts and discussion on the subject of the U.S. Army’s evolution from the Cold War through OIF.

<sup>264</sup> Brigadier General McMaster, H.R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008.

<sup>265</sup> Wright and Reese, *Op Cit*, pp. 61-62.

for these tasks. FM 3-0 [Operations] provides the doctrinal foundations.”<sup>266</sup> The systematized training program that the U.S. Army developed to train Tasks, Conditions, and Standards allowed for little flexibility outside of that provided by existing doctrine approved by U.S. Army headquarters. Quickly adapting to new environments and new enemies was retarded by the need to establish training within the combat-focused corpus of obtainable doctrine. The battle tasks that units, including the SBCT, trained upon were just that: battle tasks.

In addition to the suppressive effects of the Task, Conditions, Standards paradigm developed for training, Leonard Wong argues that that innovation in the U.S. Army was stifled by a leader development system that “encourages reactive instead of proactive thought, compliance instead of creativity, and adherence instead of audacity.”<sup>267</sup> Company commanders were required to fit 297 days of mandatory training into 256 days and this training had to fit the codified Task, Conditions, and Standards model that governed all large and small unit training exercises.<sup>268</sup> Wong also argues that “a training façade emerges when captains at the career courses are taught how to plan company training per FM 25-100 and -101, yet discover when they take command that there are few or no opportunities to plan training.”<sup>269</sup> The training and evaluation system developed during the Cold War guided all training in the post-Cold War environment and allowed little room for interpretation or modification even as the international

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<sup>266</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 7-1, Battle Focused Training, September 2003, p. 2-7.

<sup>267</sup> Wong, Leonard, Stifled Innovation? Developing Tomorrow’s Leaders Today, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, April 2002, p. 3.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid, pp. 6-14.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

security environment changed. Time constraints ensured that commanders would have to narrowly focus on the combat-oriented Tasks, Conditions, and Standards model that best fit and prepared units for a different era.<sup>270</sup>

Although the SBCT was an innovation designed to achieve Shinseki's vision of future warfare, institutional changes that had yet to be made tempered any inter- and intra-unit innovation that might have been achieved through creative training and experimentation. The operational orientation of the SBCT(s) became even more conventional following the attacks of 9/11 as the Bush Administration, through the so-called Bush Doctrine, demanded a highly-focused conventional force capable of achieving a rapid and decisive defeat of America's enemies.

## **4.2 CRITICAL JUNCTURE: 9/11 AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM**

The attacks of 9/11, the subsequent development of the Bush Doctrine, and the invasion of Afghanistan had a profound crystallizing effect on the U.S. Army's Transformation program.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> This comported with the Cold War notion that tactical commanders did not need to stray too far from doctrinal tasks to achieve mission success. Planning against an enemy (the Soviets) that was also doctrinaire and thus largely predictable allowed for the development of programmatic and systematized top-down guidance on what to train and how to train; little adaptation outside of applying other tactical skills as the need arose was required. John Tillson argues that planning during the Cold War was fixed and tactical commanders were granted little latitude in training or execution; specific training events were not required. See, Tillson, John C. F., *Learning to Adapt to Asymmetric Threats*, IDA Document Number D-3114, Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, VA, August 2005, p. 12.

If the Transformation program and the development of the SBCTs once stood the chance of even partially altering the conventional trajectory of the U.S. Army's modernization effort, that chance evaporated with the implementation of post-9/11 national security and military strategies. What was largely an extension of combat-oriented force structure with modern capabilities became an enhanced and supplementary tool for the hasty and singular purpose of destroying threat state's and organizations' offensive capacity.

On 20 September 2001, President Bush addressed a joint session of Congress and detailed what would become known as the Bush Doctrine. The Bush Doctrine "fundamentally changed the way the United States would ensure its national security. The shift from the previous 'shape, respond, prepare' posture to the new 'assure, dissuade, deter forward, and decisively defeat' had fundamental implications for how the armed forces, and the Army in particular, mans, trains, and equips itself. The new strategy requires a fully expeditionary force capable of rapidly imposing America's will on hostile foreign soil and then maintaining a robust presence to ensure the change is lasting...the Army offers the follow-through capability vital to achieving the national strategic objectives."<sup>272</sup>

The posture of the Bush Doctrine might have been novel but the premises of the Clinton Doctrine were still intact: stability in the Third World and elsewhere was a concern (now

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<sup>271</sup> The 'model' used in Afghanistan had been suggested for Iraq: "in the wake of the successful operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban, some Administration officials advocated a similar operation, entailing use of special operations forces in cooperation with indigenous Iraqi opposition forces, coupled with an extensive air offensive to destroy Hussein's most reliable Republican Guard units, command & control centers, and WMD capabilities." Bowman, Steve, Iraq: U.S. Military Operations, CRS Report for Congress, 15 July 2007, p. 2.

<sup>272</sup> Fontenot, et al, Op Cit, p. 23.

paramount) and; the United States “must and will maintain the capability to defeat any attempt by an enemy—whether a state or non-state actor—to impose its will on the United States, our allies, or our friends.”<sup>273</sup> Whereas action was once considered an option during the Clinton Administration, the Bush Administration argued that the United States now *had* to act in order to promote stability: the progeny of instability had reached its shores via student visas and commercial aircraft in the form of terrorism. The Bush Doctrine renewed emphasis on force Transformation as the vehicle for ensuring that the United States could act at a time and place of its choosing to deter or defeat enemies: “the threats and enemies we must confront have changed, and so must our forces. A military structured to deter massive Cold War-era armies must be transformed to focus more on how an adversary might fight rather than where and when a war might occur.”<sup>274</sup> This would mean, as Paul Ott argues, “the fight against terrorism will take military operations into traditional areas of U.S. national interest, but also into areas previously of little concern and likelihood of action. The ability of terrorist organizations to train, sustain, plan, and operate in remote and unstable regions poses a clear threat now.”

Regardless of the oddity and complexity of threat that was now clearly present, “the Pentagon assumed a force which could defeat advanced state militaries could inherently handle non-state threats” and that the enhanced capabilities brought by the modernization program, RMA, and Transformation, “would make armed intervention in far-flung regions easier.”<sup>275</sup> This was good news for the Bush Administration since only “modest attempts at organizational

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<sup>273</sup> Bush, George W., National Security Strategy of the United States, September 2002, p. 30.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

<sup>275</sup> Metz, Steven, “America’s Defense Transformation: A Conceptual and Political History,” Defense Studies, Volume 6, Number 1, March 2006, pp. 11 and 16, respectively.



and doctrinal innovation” had been tried even with the inculcation of advanced information technologies throughout the U.S. Army.<sup>276</sup> Implicit in President Bush’s renewed call for Transformation was that the previous path of Transformation was effective only for Cold War adversaries. But the new emphasis on change in the military did little to alter the conventional focus of the U.S. Army; instead, the President’s strategy accelerated an already aggressively combat-oriented Transformation program.

Decisively defeating enemies was not a new concept for the U.S. Army. What was new was the President’s agenda of “bringing down hostile governments and creating governments favorable to us.”<sup>277</sup> The precision combat capabilities requisite to accomplishing the first part of this task already existed in the U.S. Army (and in the joint force) and were being refined through the Transformation effort. What the U.S. Army lacked was the unconventional and MOOTW skills required of this type of strategy.<sup>278</sup> Removing a government was the easy part of the Bush Doctrine. The difficult and largely untested part of the Bush Doctrine, creating stability—the lynchpin of strategic success—was only lightly considered in this new strategy and incompletely covered in extant U.S. Army doctrine.

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<sup>276</sup> See, Arquilla, John and David Ronfeldt, “Swarming—the Next Face of Battle,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, 29 September 2003.

<sup>277</sup> Rosen, Stephen Peter, “The Future of War and the American Military,” *Harvard Magazine*, May-June 2002, p. 31.

<sup>278</sup> Jeremy Black argues that the joint strike capabilities that the U.S. military developed were challenged in unconventional environments because joint structures and doctrines “still focus on symmetrical conflict rather than supporting forces in asymmetrical roles such as counterinsurgency or peace-keeping.” See, Black, Jeremy, “War and Strategy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Watch on the West*, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Volume 3, Number 4, February 2002.

In the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR), Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld argued that “while the United States cannot predict with confidence which adversaries will pose threats in the future, the types of military capabilities that will be used to challenge U.S. interests and U.S. military forces can be identified and understood. As in the September terror attacks in New York and Washington, future adversaries will seek to avoid U.S. strengths and attack U.S. vulnerabilities, using asymmetric approaches such as terrorism, information operations, and ballistic and cruise missile attacks.”<sup>279</sup> To combat these threats, “combat operations will be structured to eliminate enemy offensive capability across the depth of its territory, restore favorable military conditions in the region, and create acceptable political conditions for the cessation of hostilities.”<sup>280</sup> This last statement roughly reflects the aim of any combat operations and contained no new direction for military planners. Apparently, traditional combat operations would suffice for restoring favorable military conditions, developing stability, and creating acceptable political conditions; hence, no real significant change to existing programs, organization, or doctrine was required.

It is difficult to comprehend how ‘asymmetric’ adversaries would be combated with ‘symmetric’ means, particularly when these means were designed for applying force and winning battles, not for shaping or creating political conditions and creating or restoring stability at the termination of hostilities. Jack Shanahan contends that the Pentagon is “dominated by

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<sup>279</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald H., Quadrennial Defense Review Report, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 30 September 2001, pp. 61-62.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid, p. 21.

Cold Warriors, obsessed with big, expensive weapons programs.”<sup>281</sup> Michael Noonan and John Hillen argue that “the American military devotes the great majority of its resources to preparing for a symmetrical fight, retaining an establishment that seeks to fight the ‘Third World War’ but along fundamentally World War II or Cold War lines.”<sup>282</sup> But the adversary that the United States was targeting in Afghanistan could only partially be described as conventional and was by no means symmetric, at least not for long. Suggestions that the United States would have to or should shift away from a combat-oriented conventional force during the post-Cold War period or in the pursuit of the Bush Doctrine were unacceptable. As Metz argues, “the idea that the United States should shift its strategy to asymmetric threats, though, was never accepted fully by a military and defense community focused on, even wedded to, high tech conventional war. There were many discussions and admissions, but few changes to programs, organizations, or, most importantly, the defense budget.”<sup>283</sup> The differences between the U.S. Army and the organizations it would encounter in Afghanistan and later in Iraq were radical, and these differences proved significant in the arbitration of stability in both countries.

Sloan contends that the differences between smaller, unspecialized, and networked terrorist organizations and larger, specialized, and hierarchical organizations, like the U.S. Army, are significant in that the terrorist organization can enjoy certain freedoms of maneuver that

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<sup>281</sup> Shanahan, Jack, et al, “Bury Cold War Mindset: Fourth-Generation Warfare Rewrites Military Strategy,” Defense News, 5-11 August 2002.

<sup>282</sup> Noonan and Hillen, Op Cit.

<sup>283</sup> Metz, Steven, “Learning from Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy,” Op Cit, pp. 13-14.

afford distinct advantage in any confrontation.<sup>284</sup> This lesson was only slowly learned after the commencement of OEF as Taliban and al-Qaeda forces refused to be decisively defeated at a time and place of the U.S. military's choosing. Conversely, the Pentagon quickly learned those lessons that supported continued fiscal and doctrinal investment in the concepts of RDO and those embedded in Transformation. The rapid destruction and evacuation of conventionally equipped Taliban forces allowed the Pentagon and others to tout early victory in Afghanistan as a singular success justifying not only the Bush Doctrine but also the rapid/lethal capability engendered in the U.S. Army's Transformation program. Christopher Bowie argued that success in Afghanistan (and in the Gulf War and the former Yugoslavia) suggests strongly that "to better prepare for uncertain events in a hostile security environment, the U.S. will need to invest in concepts, capabilities, and technologies to sustain its competitive advantages on the future battlefield."<sup>285</sup> But battlefield success was never in question. What was unproven was whether the U.S. Army had the capability to adapt to its environment and the follow-on mission of creating or restoring stability in unconventional environments by employing tactics suited to the OOTW routinely subordinated to combat operations.

This narrow view, the assumption that the U.S. military would "create a 'whole new warfare environment' with capabilities and early success in Afghanistan,"<sup>286</sup> blurred the bigger

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<sup>284</sup> Sloan, Stephen, "Terrorism and Asymmetry," Challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically, Can America be Defeated, Ed. Matthews, Lloyd J., Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 1998, pp. 183-84.

<sup>285</sup> Bowie, Christopher J., et al, Future War: What Trends in America's Post-Cold War Military Conflicts Tell us about Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century Warfare, Northrop Grumman Analysis Center Papers, January 2003, p. 4.

<sup>286</sup> Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Elements of Defense Transformation, October 2004, p. 9.

picture of creating stability and governments friendly to the United States both in principle and deed. As Nagl asserts, “the Army focused on winning short campaigns to topple unfriendly governments without considering the more difficult tasks required to rebuild friendly ones.”<sup>287</sup> The Pentagon’s assumption was that stability, through a process still not understood, would emerge from the successful application of force through the principles of Transformation: “a process that shapes the changing nature of military competition and cooperation through new combinations of concepts, capabilities, people, and organizations that exploit our nation’s advantages and protect against our asymmetric vulnerabilities to sustain our strategic position, which helps underpin peace and stability in the world.”<sup>288</sup> The automatic transmogrification of combat capabilities into peace and stability in the world was never further explained.

#### **4.3 INSTITUTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL PERSISTENCE: ON A ROAD MOST TRAVELLED**

In the 2003 National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, President Bush recognized, however belatedly, the changes that had occurred in the post-Cold War international security environment. “The international environment defines the boundaries within which terrorists’ strategies take shape. As a result of freer, more open borders this environment unwittingly

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<sup>287</sup> National Press Club, “Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare: A Discussion by Senior Military Scholars,” The National Press Club, Washington DC, 22 July 2008, p. 4.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

provides access to havens, capabilities, and support to terrorists.”<sup>289</sup> Changes wrought by globalization were also identified, “with the end of the Cold War, we also saw dramatic improvements in the ease of transnational communication, commerce, and travel. Unfortunately, the terrorists adapted to this new international environment and turned the advances of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century into the destructive enablers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”<sup>290</sup> To combat these threats President Bush recommended the defeat of terrorist organizations by “attacking their sanctuaries; leadership; command, control, and communications; material support; and finances”; by denying “further sponsorship, support, and sanctuary to terrorists by ensuring other states accept their responsibilities to take action against these international threats within their sovereign territory” and; “where states are unwilling, we will act decisively to counter the threat they pose and, ultimately, to compel them to cease supporting terrorism.”<sup>291</sup> This would be achieved by neutralizing threat organizations as early as possible and by diminishing the underlying conditions that permit the development and nurturing of these threats. Combating multiform and transnational adversaries, in myriad environments, would require an expanded use of the U.S. Army in roles that were familiar and courted (HIC) *and* in roles that were foreign and eschewed (protracted stability operations).<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Bush, George W., National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, February 2003, p. 6.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid, p. 7.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid, pp. 11-12.

<sup>292</sup> Ronald Newton argues that military troops are the “ultimate tangible instrument” of the state in maintaining its security and thus would naturally be employed to combat transnational threats. See, Newton, Ronald A., Combating Transnational Organized Crime: An Emerging Special Operations Mission, Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, 2 March 2001, p. 15.

The doctrinal publications that emerged after the attacks of 9/11 are revealing insofar as they show no appreciable respect for the complexity and depth of the explicit and implied tasks laid out in various national strategies post-9/11. The publication of Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations and Support Operations, in February 2003, demonstrated how little effect the U.S. Army's experiences in Afghanistan had on doctrine and on the Army's prevailing and frankly, hubristic, conventional mindset: "the characteristics that make our Army a premier warfighting organization also serve it well in conducting stability operations and support operations...the Army is versatile in its ability to task organize in size, structure, and functions for widely varying disparate missions. The Army commands the respect of belligerents by the threat of force, or, if that fails, the use of force to compel compliance."<sup>293</sup> Field Manual 7-100, Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy, describes the U.S. Army's view of the prevailing threat, the Contemporary Operational Environment (COE), and the training conducted for operations in this environment, "as a baseline for developing specific OPFORs [Opposing Forces] for specific training environments, this manual describes an OPFOR that is representative of contemporary nation-states. This composite of the characteristics of real-world military and paramilitary forces provides a framework for the realistic and relevant portrayal of capabilities and actions that U.S. armed forces might face in the COE."<sup>294</sup> Interestingly, the U.S. Army's universal task list for units did not substantially change following experiences in the post-Cold War environment and Afghanistan (even when offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations were delineated). Tactical level tasks remained

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<sup>293</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-07, Op Cit, pp. 1-1—1-2.

<sup>294</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 7-100, Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy, May 2003, p. xiii.

almost entirely combat-oriented even though the tasks being conducted in this environment were at least a blend of conventional and unconventional skill sets and did not fit into all four categories of offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations equally.<sup>295</sup> The differences that once separated these missions and attendant tasks were now not quite so stark; combat-oriented tasks and training could not possibly account for all of the tactical nuances presenting in varied operational environments. But Field Manual 7-1, Battle Focused Training, reminded soldiers at all levels, “training for warfighting readiness is the Army’s number one priority in peace and war. Army leaders at all levels are responsible for success on the battlefield.”<sup>296</sup> ‘Warfighting’ on ‘battlefields’ then necessarily encompassed stability operations although this would be difficult to discern from the focus of these manuals.

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<sup>295</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 7-15, the Army Universal Task List, August 2003, pp. 8-28—33, Section V—Art. 8.5 (Conduct Tactical Mission Tasks). “The purpose of FM 7-15 is to provide a standard, doctrinal foundation for the Army’s tactical collective tasks and thus includes a whole host of tasks that are to be accomplished across the spectrum of conflict.” See, Herman, Bradley J., *The Army’s Military Decision Making: Adequate or Update and Expand?*, School of Advanced Military Studies U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 22 May 2008, p. 26.

<sup>296</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 7-1, Op Cit, p. 1-2.



**Table 1.** The U.S. Army Universal Task List, Tactical Mission Tasks, August 2003

<b>Bypass Enemy Obstacles, Forces, Positions</b>	<b>Canalize Enemy Movement</b>	<b>Clear Enemy Forces</b>	<b>Conduct Counterreconnaissance</b>	<b>Contain an Enemy Force</b>	<b>Control an Area</b>
<b>Defeat an Enemy Force</b>	<b>Destroy a Designated Enemy Force/Position</b>	<b>Disengage from a Designated Enemy Force</b>	<b>Disrupt a Designated Enemy Force's Formation/ Tempo/ Timetable</b>	<b>Conduct an Exfiltration</b>	<b>Fix an Enemy Force</b>
<b>Follow and Assume the Missions of a Friendly Force</b>	<b>Interdict an Area/Route to Prevent/ Disrupt/Delay its use by an Enemy Force</b>	<b>Isolate an Enemy Force</b>	<b>Neutralize an Enemy Force</b>	<b>Occupy an Area</b>	<b>Reduce an Encircled/ Bypassed Enemy Force</b>
<b>Retain a Terrain Feature</b>	<b>Secure a Unit/Facility/ Location</b>	<b>Seize an Area (Using Overwhelming Force)</b>	<b>Support by Fire the Maneuver of Another Friendly Force</b>	<b>Suppress a Force/Weapon System</b>	<b>Turn an Enemy Force</b>
<b>Conduct Combat Search and Rescue</b>	<b>Conduct Consolidation and Reorganization Activities</b>	<b>Conduct Consolidation and Reorganization Activities</b>	<b>Reconstitute Tactical Forces</b>	<b>Reorganize Units as Part of a Reconstitution Effort</b>	<b>Regenerate Units and Organizations as Part of a Reconstitution Effort</b>
<b>Conduct Weapon System Replacement Operations</b>					

The inculcation of digital information systems into the force through Transformation also contributed to the sense that being combat prepared necessarily translated into full-spectrum preparedness. Field Manual 5-0, Army Planning and Orders Production, indicates that information superiority, or combat information superiority, creates conditions “that allow commanders to shape the operational environment and enhance the effects of all elements of combat power.”<sup>297</sup> Supposedly, efficiency and effectiveness in staff and line unit operations were enhanced by “reducing the human labor needed to organize information and put it in a usable form.”<sup>298</sup> There was little concern paid to the human labor needed to interpret this information and use it appropriately: the mere organization and processing of information would apparently be sufficient. Processing speed replaced deliberation and careful consideration as a necessary attribute. “Continuous connectivity to the GIG [Global Information Grid] empowers Soldiers to conduct full-spectrum operations. In addition to near real time situational awareness in the tactical area of operations, Army personnel have access to near real time situational awareness in the tactical area of operations. Army personnel have access and provide information to HSOCs [Home Station Operations Centers], knowledge centers, and other information-enabling portions of the joint team—redefining the term reachback. This access to knowledge facilitates rapid and seamless transitions of missions and tasks without loss of

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<sup>297</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 5-0, Army Planning and Orders Production, January 2005, p. 1-11.

<sup>298</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 6-0, Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces, August 2003, p. 3-7.

momentum.”<sup>299</sup> Implied in these doctrinal pieces was that timely information was the principal requirement for transforming a vastly complex environment teeming with unorthodox foes into something more palatable and doctrinaire. If and how this information was obtained and questions regarding the interpretation of this information only seemed to matter insofar as combat operations were affected. The gathering and speeding along of *combat* relevant information during *stability* operations did not seem to register as a defect of the transformed system that had been developed and was instead considered as an enabler of full-spectrum capacity.

The precision of the U.S. Army’s weapons and information systems seems to have blinded many to the complexities of the wars the United States was now entering and how both the human and political elements of these wars was confounding our technological advances and transformational efforts. The United States’ new strategies demanded that after the cessation of major combat operations, stability operations would occur. But the U.S. Army largely rejected the lessons learned from the stability operations of the 1990s<sup>300</sup> in favor of combat operations where only the strongest wins.<sup>301</sup> The mismatch between real ability and supposed ability was great but the capacity to adapt to circumstance and away from a conventionally-oriented, combat-focused mindset and operational paradigm seemed of little import to U.S. Army planners

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<sup>299</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, United States Army Transformation Roadmap, 1 November 2003, p. 10-1.

<sup>300</sup> Meigs, Montgomery C., “Unorthodox Thoughts about Asymmetric Warfare,” *Parameters*, Summer, 2003, p. 13.

<sup>301</sup> Wilson, G. I., et al, “4GW: Tactics of the Weak Confound the Strong,” *Military.com*, 8 September 2003, [http://www.military.com/NewContent?file=Wilson\\_090803](http://www.military.com/NewContent?file=Wilson_090803), accessed on 18 October 2008.

and strategists. As Colin Gray asserts, “the traditional American way of war was designed to take down regular enemies, and was not overly attentive to the strategic effect and political consequences of military action. That legacy makes the task before the agents of transformation and adaptation even greater than perhaps they have realized to date.”<sup>302</sup>

#### 4.4 CONCLUSIONS

The apparent short-term success of the U.S. Army’s Transformation program and of high-intensity operations in Afghanistan led the Pentagon to assume that this model of warfare could translate to almost any circumstance and thus provide full-spectrum dominance. Not only would little adjustment have to be made to the defense Transformation program in pursuit of national defense strategies and the Bush Doctrine, little adaptation was required by the U.S. Army as it pursued objectives in enormously hostile, doctrinally foreign locales and situations. But Becevich contests, “the generals and admirals who touted the wonders of full spectrum dominance were guilty of flagrant professional malpractice, if not out-right fraud. To judge by the record of the past twenty years, U.S. forces win decisively only when the enemy obligingly fights on American terms.”<sup>303</sup> It is surprising, given the post-9/11 interest in failed and failing states and the threat organizations emerging from these areas, that the Pentagon would be so quick to confer full-spectrum dominance on a force that was almost strictly conventionally

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<sup>302</sup> Gray, Colin S., *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, March 2006, p. 55.

<sup>303</sup> Bacevich, Andrew J., *The Limits of Power*, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2008, p. 130.

capable and had only completed the first phases of a long campaign.<sup>304</sup> The new assessment of threats to American security, i.e. shadowy organizations operating in or coming from failed and failing states, “quickly became conventional wisdom within US foreign policy and national security circles, and weak states were increasingly associated with real or perceived transnational threats, including drug trafficking, terrorism, and organized crime that could have serious consequences for the United States. In an age of global threats, national security was increasingly tied to internal conditions within other states.”<sup>305</sup> But even if the international security environment had changed, dramatically, “war itself remained the same for the Pentagon. There was little disagreement among the senior U.S. military leadership over their view of future war: the major protagonists were states, and victory came through overwhelming military force.”<sup>306</sup> As Thomas Edison once famously quipped “vision without execution is hallucination.” The Pentagon and the U.S. Army envisioned the achievement of full-spectrum dominance, stability provision, and the quelling of failing or failed states by transforming,

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<sup>304</sup> See discussion of failed and failing states in, Bush, George, National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>305</sup> Stewart, Patrick and Kaysie Brown, Greater than the Sum of Its Parts?: Assessing the ‘Whole of Government’ Approaches to Fragile States, International Peace Academy, 2007, p. 33.

<sup>306</sup> Shultz, Richard H. and Andrea J. Dew, Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias: The Warriors of Contemporary Combat, Columbia University Press, New York, 2006, p. 9. Peter Mansoor argues a similar point regarding the prevailing institutional belief that the U.S. Army “existed only to fight the kind of wars it wanted to fight. The kind of wars we did so well in: WWII and high-end conventional combat of Desert Storm. So, we didn’t teach it [COIN] in our professional military education systems, we didn’t study it as professionals and we weren’t prepared to fight it when we went into Iraq.” Colonel (Ret.) Mansoor, Peter, Telephone Interview, 12 September 2008.

training for, planning, resourcing, and executing only one phase of the spectrum: combat operations against state-based or similar forces. Full-spectrum dominance could be achieved by applying the principles of combat. Thus, any requirement for significant adaptation was obviated: this was the hallucination.

The U.S. Army Transformation program enabled the transfer of the preferred vision of future warfare amongst states and state-based actors to a force that was already highly predisposed to this vision. Hierarchical, centralized, and specialized units readily accepted and inculcated information-age technologies into the conventional force with aplomb and applied these capabilities with exactitude in Afghanistan and thus reinforced the premises of the Transformation program.<sup>307</sup> Without deviation from the notion that this capability produced full-spectrum dominance, Transformation became a self-licking ice cream cone justifying further advocacy for transforming into a military model that already existed. But if the U.S. Army was not full-spectrum dominant, as was claimed, then significant adaptation would have to be made to ensure the success of various national strategies developed after 9/11. A force predisposed to combat, both in mindset and in execution, would need to quickly master myriad other bands of the spectrum that were left unattended by training, doctrine, and vision. The longer that it took the U.S. Army to achieve strategic success in Afghanistan after the defeat of that nation's paltry conventional forces, the more likely that the spectrum would shift leaving the force to address tasks and conditions defying the conventions and assumptions that the post-Cold War and post-9/11 force was based upon.

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<sup>307</sup> Nagl and Yingling correctly argue that the U.S. Army is too hierarchical and too specialized. See Nagl, John A., and Paul L. Yingling, "New Rules for New Enemies," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2006.

Walter Lacquer, in discussing the receding fortunes of guerrilla war at the end of the Cold War period, described conditions that would favor its recurrence: major war, natural catastrophe, or the weakening of the authority of the state.<sup>308</sup> The post-Cold War weakening of state authority in general favored the recrudescence of guerrilla war; the Bush Administration's call for regime replacement in inimical states made it a certainty. The same combat-focused military power the United States built, honed, and wields to achieve conventional objectives is also proving to be the power that incites instability and the wrath of the lesser-included. Without a commensurate and complementary ability to blend combat power into true full-spectrum dominance, the U.S. Army would not be able to adapt to the post-Cold War international security environment and aid in achieving strategic interests as they have so far been defined. The signing of the Authorization for the Use of Military Force against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 1007-243) on 16 October 2002, the subsequent invasion of Iraq, and the rise of instability there would bring this last point into fine relief.

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<sup>308</sup> Laquer, Walter, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical & Critical Case Study*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1998, p. 409.

## 5.0 STRUCTURAL PERSISTENCE: THE INVASION OF IRAQ AND COMPELLED ADAPTATION

*“Quod cito acquiritur cito perit.”*—“What is quickly gained is quickly lost.”

The invasion of Iraq began on 20 March 2003. Within 21 days of the start of OIF, the U.S. Army moved into the Iraqi capital, Baghdad. On 1 May 2003, President Bush announced the end of major combat operations from the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln by recapitulating how victory in combat had been achieved: “Operation IRAQI FREEDOM was carried out with a combination of precision and speed and boldness the enemy did not expect, and the world had not seen before. From distant bases or ships at sea, we sent planes and missiles that could destroy an enemy division, or strike a single bunker. Marines and soldiers charged to Baghdad across 350 miles of hostile ground, in one of the swiftest advances of heavy arms in history. You have shown the world the skill and the might of the American Armed Forces.”<sup>309</sup> He followed this by reaffirming the central postulation of the Bush Doctrine and the apparent success of military operations supporting this doctrine: “Today, we have the greater power to free a nation

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<sup>309</sup> Bush, George W., “President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq have Ended,” Remarks by the President from the USS Abraham Lincoln, 1 May 2003.



by breaking a dangerous and aggressive regime. With new tactics and precision weapons, we can achieve military objectives without directing violence against civilians.”<sup>310</sup>

Capturing the capital city of an opponent’s country (through and by defeat of the opponent’s battlefield forces) has long been a benchmark of achieving victory in conflict if surrender was not achieved beforehand. Certainly, this is what President Bush was referring to when he announced the end of major combat operations and deemed OIF a mission accomplished. In the classic sense, the achievement of military objectives in combat operations translates into success for the whole mission. This results from a propensity to delink military and political objectives and by the conflation of battlefield success to overall success in war. It also stems from confusing sub-strategic and strategic objectives, mistaking the completion of these objectives with achieving desired end-state conditions, and from bureaucratizing the concept of war.<sup>311</sup> Through bureaucratization, objectives, conditions, and definitions become codified. This results in the construction of concepts and perceptions that do not wither easily and defy translation when circumstances change. The structures, institutions, and assumptions related to ‘war’ persist even when a particular conflict morphs into something other than war.<sup>312</sup>

The assumption that the mission in Iraq had indeed been accomplished in early 2003 ignored a number of indications that the mission had only just begun and that the war, in terms of

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Smith, Rupert, *The Utility of Force*, Vintage Books, New York, 2005.

<sup>312</sup> James Wright argues that “as the character of war changes, the requirements for winning it have changed as well. The paradox of the Long War is that tactical victory does not inevitably lead to winning the war.” Wright, James W., *Military Effectiveness in the Long War*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 24 May 2007, p. 28.

achieving strategic objectives, was far from over. First, as the Bush Doctrine required, Iraq had not yet been stabilized to a degree where potential threats to stability could easily be warded off by the mere presence of combat forces. Second, Phase IV (Stability, Support, and Reconstruction Operations (SSR), collectively)<sup>313</sup> operations had not yet begun and security was only being maintained tenuously in the brief calm that followed the storm aptly named “Thunder Run.” Third, the Cold War model of transferring responsibility for Phase IV operations to a collective of host-country, United States’, UN, and international agencies, was not yet realized. Lastly, the U.S. Army, largely because of inadequate resourcing for Phase IV operations (in both planning<sup>314</sup> and in the structural potential for wide-scale execution<sup>315</sup>), was unprepared for a

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<sup>313</sup> These were traditional operations in Phase IV. Phase IV operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been much more complex and have included (at a minimum) significant combat, counter-terror, counterinsurgency, and population protection operations.

<sup>314</sup> Perito argues that “the U.S. experience in Operation Iraqi Freedom was remarkably similar to the U.S. intervention in Panama...there the United States had no security policy for the period following the use of force. No thought was given to including military police in the intervention force, nor was there a plan for quickly reconstituting local security forces that would perform in accordance with democratic principles.” See Perito, Robert M., “The Coalition Provisional Authority’s Experience with Public Security in Iraq: Lessons Identified,” U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington DC, April 2005, p. 12-13.

<sup>315</sup> Blank argues that Army strategy “proclaims that it will be satisfied with nothing less than decisive victory, but if victory cannot be plausibly defined then what happens? Our strategy does not know where it is going.” Decisive victory, with the pre-OIF U.S. Army structure, was unlikely especially when considering the difficulties posed by the strategy requisite to the Bush Doctrine. See Blank, Stephen J. “How we will Lose the Next War with Russia: A Critique of U.S. Military Strategy,” Challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically: Can America be Defeated?, Ed. Matthews, Lloyd J., Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 1998, pp. 243-44.

follow-on mission requiring unparalleled dexterity in the application of skills necessary in OOTW.<sup>316</sup>

The enduring characteristics of previous decisions to make the U.S. Army a highly conventional and lethally-focused force (even among the remaining unconventional elements of the U.S. Army) combined with an assumption that this force would (therefore) be full-spectrum dominant, put the U.S. Army in a severely disadvantageous position.<sup>317</sup> To be sure, the U.S. Army had carried out its conventional mission magnificently. But its capacity for adaptation in the face of significant mission change to support strategic objectives was dubious. Structurally,

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<sup>316</sup> Wright and Reese contend that “the US Army that entered Iraq in March 2003 accepted stability and support operations as operational requirements, and could even refer to published doctrine that established a formal approach to those operations. However, doctrine has limited influence if it is not disseminated and practiced through the means of education and training.” As demonstrated in previous chapters, doctrine was limited on the subject of stability and support operations and was not prioritized in education and training. See Wright and Reese, *Op Cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>317</sup> The idea that the U.S. Army was still full-spectrum capable endured at the highest levels well into OIF despite the acknowledgement that “preventing conflict requires the capability to perform stability operations to maintain or re-establish order, promote peace and security or improve existing conditions” and despite the fact that operations in Iraq and Afghanistan were far from over and success across the spectrum had not been proven: “At present, the Armed Forces remain optimized for high-intensity conflict and combat operations in mature theaters. Our experience in the WOT has provided insights on both the strengths and deficiencies in our concepts for employing military force as well as some of the capabilities the Armed Forces must improve. The Armed Forces remain fully capable of conducting major combat operations and a range of lesser contingencies. While we have adapted these forces successfully in OEF and OIF, success in future operations will require further and more substantive change.” Myers, Richard B., *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America*, 2004, pp. 13 and 22, respectively.

the U.S. Army was not predisposed to conducting OOTW or for participating in an interagency process that required this capacity. Cognitively and culturally (because of the influence of structural conditions on the reception and interpretation of mutating environmental stimuli), the U.S. Army was less than optimally prepared for refitting combat equipment and processes and for translating decades' worth of training and indoctrination in combat into SSR operations.

The persistence of the post-Cold War U.S. Army structure, and its almost strictly combat-oriented focus, would have a significant effect on the organizations' ability to adapt to the degree required to achieve strategic political objectives in post-combat Iraq.<sup>318</sup> The legacy (or the core attributes) of decisions affecting the direction and composition of the U.S. Army would persist and would deleteriously influence the Army's ability to adapt throughout OIF.<sup>319</sup>

## **5.1 MISTAKING STABILITY FOR STABILITY**

In traditional military planning it is expected that stability is supposed to follow the achievement of combat objectives. According to the Pentagon (as discussed previously), success in combat operations would almost automatically lead to a smooth transition into peace and stability. But

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<sup>318</sup> As noted variously earlier, this has been a persistent problem for the U.S. Army. Metz argued in 1992 that "based on our Vietnam experience, we developed strategy and doctrine that emphasized the political nature of counterinsurgency, the need to focus on underlying causes rather than military manifestations and the need for an indirect US role. But today progress has stalled and can only be reinvigorated by breaking through some key intellectual barriers. Foremost among these is an inability to smoothly link the application of force to desired policy outcomes." Metz, Steven, "Victory and Compromise in Counterinsurgency," *Op Cit*, p. 47.

<sup>319</sup> See discussion in Chapters 8 and 9.

following combat in OIF, stability was tenuous and ephemeral. A poorly resourced and undermanned stability plan contributed to this situation. Paradoxically, the rapidity of operations and the cessation of major combat also contributed to this state of affairs and indeed, accelerated the potential for destabilization. The lightning fast pace of combat operations planned for, trained, and executed by the U.S. Army ensured that many of the elements (CS and CSS units, principally) traditionally ascribed the role of providing stability prior to the introduction of UN and other-than-Department of Defense (DOD) agencies would lag both spatially and temporally. This combination did not determine the instability that followed in Iraq but certainly contributed to its rise.<sup>320</sup> Perhaps more significant was the mistaken assumption of stability naturally flowing from successful combat operations. Although poor planning, a lack of immediate CS and CSS unit support, and an ahead-of-schedule termination of major combat operations contributed to the growth of instability in Iraq, the major difficulty facing the U.S. Army was a

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<sup>320</sup> Defense Secretary Robert Gates later criticized the much heralded 'Shock and Awe' at the center of OIF invasion plans and U.S. Army doctrine for contributing to the problems encountered during post-combat operations. "Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates yesterday criticized the shock-and-awe strategy of the 2003 Iraq invasion and said the Pentagon's narrow focus on conventional combat operations proved costly when U.S. ground troops had to switch gears to try to stabilize that country." Tyson, Ann Scott, "Gates Criticizes Conventional Focus at Start of Iraq War," Washington Post, 30 September 2008, p. 4. Chiarelli and Michaelis also later questioned the efficacy of the traditional phasing of operations, "no longer is it acceptable to think sequentially through stability operations and support operations by believing that if you first establish the security environment, you can work sequentially toward establishing critical infrastructure and governmental legitimacy then drive toward economic independence." Chiarelli, Peter W. and Patrick R. Michaelis, "Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations," Military Review, July-August 2005, p. 15.

fundamental unpreparedness to understand what stability operations implied and how to conduct them.

The assumption of stability being a *fait accompli* of combat operations led to an institutional disregard of training for and conducting stability operations and a mismatch between mission and capability. Also lacking was an appreciation of how significant these operations are to translating achievements in combat into strategic and political success. The choice by Pentagon and U.S. Army leaders to focus on combat operations in planning and training at the expense of stability operations had a cascading effect on the entirety of the force. At the tactical unit level, particularly in the combat units that comprised the majority of the force in Iraq in early 2003, there was little understanding of what stability operations were or what agencies had responsibility for these operations. Two soldiers describe their experience following the termination of major combat operations:

*“We really left our comfort zone when we got out of HIC [High Intensity Conflict] operations. The simplest things we had to pick up. Some guys had Kosovo and Bosnia training and experience. We used their ideas to implement what we had to do after major conflict ended. One of our guys was Ranger qualified and he taught us how to do room clearing drills. We had to secure our area and make sure that the houses in our area were secure. We did not have training to do this.”<sup>321</sup>*

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<sup>321</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion and to Falluja (March 2003-July 2003), Personal Interview, 20 June 2008.

*“A SOSO [Stability Operations and Support Operations] operation? When that came into play, none of us knew what they were talking about. We first heard about SOSO at the beginning of operations in Samawah, in the first 2 or 3 weeks. It didn’t take much to get Iraq. It was over and done with very quickly, or so we thought. They told us that we were going to go into SOSO operations. We looked around and said, this is not our job, this is not what we do, this is SF stuff, this is Civil stuff, Civil Ops should be handling this stuff. Can we go home? No, no, no. We have to stand schools up, get the government up, have town councils. We are all looking at each other like what the hell are you talking about? We’ve never done this before and this wasn’t part of our train-up to come here. We didn’t know that this was going to happen. Rules of Engagement came in a new level. You didn’t have a uniformed enemy anymore.”<sup>322</sup>*

As William Phelps argues, “clearly the Army has a conflict between its charter to fight and win the Nation’s wars and its ever-increasing need to participate in peace operations. The challenges arise from a mismatch between mission needs and the forces available to execute those missions. The Army must now relook its roles and missions.”<sup>323</sup> The disparity between perception and reality and between full-spectrum operations and what the U.S. Army was really capable of became very clear in the early stages of post-combat Iraq. Assuming that stability existed or would exist did not make it so.

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<sup>322</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion and to Samawah, Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

<sup>323</sup> Phelps, William G., “Training for War While Keeping the Peace,” *Military Review*, May-June 2004.

## 5.2 HANDOVERS, MODELS, AND MUSICAL CHAIRS

The U.S. Army's unpreparedness for Phase IV operations was exacerbated by a faulty inter-agency transition process premised on the linear and sequential phase model used by the military. "In essence, with the exception of immediate security concerns and actions necessary for emergency restoration of critical infrastructure, the majority of activities required for Phase IV were perceived by the Department of Defense to be the responsibility of civilian agencies and departments."<sup>324</sup> This model assumed that the conclusion of force-on-force combat activities would result in significantly reduced levels of violence and greater security throughout the area of operations.<sup>325</sup> A more secure environment permitted follow-on support from various U.S. and

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<sup>324</sup> Bensahel, Nora, et al, *After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2008, p. 15. Prior to the invasion of Iraq, Crane and Terrill identified 135 essential tasks grouped into 21 mission categories arrayed across the transition period. Crane, Conrad C. and W. Andrew W. Terrill, *Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 2003, p. 46. The training required for the implementation or supervision of these tasks doubtfully appeared in the mission essential task list of any units engaged in combat and later in stability operations in Iraq. Additionally, Catherine Dale argues that, "by many accounts, the OIF post-war planning process did not provide commanders, before the start of combat operations, with a clear picture of the extent of their assigned post-war responsibilities." Dale, Catherine, *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Strategies, Approaches, Results and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress, 22 September 2008, p. 31.

<sup>325</sup> Evidence for this: 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division and many implementing units (civilian and military) either did not have or were not briefed on USCENTCOM's detailed Phase IV plans. Additionally, CFLCC was replaced by a much smaller and more tactical V Corps charged with implementing a plan that differed from the original. Collins,



international agencies for SSR operations with logistical and security support provided by the armed forces. But such support is difficult to entice or maintain in an environment where security is low and violence is endemic. In Iraq, at the time when these external agencies were to begin providing support, the security situation was dire and rapidly deteriorating. Thus, the U.S. Army was left with the bulk of responsibility for all post-combat operations. Conrad Crane describes how this process was supposed to work in the early stages of stability operations in Iraq:

*“there is supposed to be handover point where the military hands off to a national or international organization which then hands off to an indigenous organization. When they talk about fixing the interagency process, they are talking about making this model work. We are like a quarterback that never has anyone to hand off to.”*<sup>326</sup>

What this transition model does not take into account is the possibility of a total disintegration of host-nation security forces and the emergence of a complex insurgency like the one that developed in post-combat Iraq. In the midst of a post-combat complex insurgency, the security situation is at best unstable; inter-agency and international support agencies either cannot or will not participate in SSR activities in this environment. The prevailing assumption

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Joseph J., Choosing War: The Decision to Invade Iraq and its Aftermath, Institute for National Strategic Studies Occasional Paper 5, National Defense University, April 2005, p. 12.

<sup>326</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad C., Personal Interview, 5 November 2008.

that success in combat would seamlessly transform into successful post-combat operations was seriously misleading.<sup>327</sup>

What proved particularly disastrous to the proper functioning of this handover model was the emergence of an insurgency *after* the cessation of major combat.<sup>328</sup> In traditional, even irregular, operations, insurgencies are treated as subset of combat operations, not as a phenomenon emerging during stability operations.<sup>329</sup> Also, the standard definitions for what an insurgency is and why it exists became confused in post-combat Iraq; the insurgency in Iraq did not fit any standard pre-Cold War or Cold War paradigm. “Most theoretical works on insurgency warfare make the assumption that an insurgent fights for something greater than military victory. The US military’s doctrinal understanding of insurgencies certainly assumed that larger political goals, like the revolutionary seizure of power or the establishment of a particular ideology such as communism, have provided the impetus to modern insurgencies.

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<sup>327</sup> The process of ‘nation-building’ through a capable interagency process, even in a complex operating environment, was considered entirely possible by the Pentagon. See, Kimball, Raymond A., *Transformation Under Fire: A Historical Case Study with Modern Parallels*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, October, 2007, p. 21.

<sup>328</sup> Thus, “how the war is fought becomes crucially important to the quality and sustainability of the resulting peace. Operations which could previously be clearly and conveniently labeled—for example combat, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, counter-revolutionary warfare, humanitarian operations—can no longer be so.” OIF was proving immensely more complex than assumed and to a degree that models, doctrine, and experience could not account for. See, Kiszely, John, *Post-Modern Challenges for Modern Warriors*, The Shrivenham Papers, Number 5, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, December 2007, p. 7.

<sup>329</sup> Metz describes how insurgency is seen as a variant of war in Metz, Steven, “New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21<sup>st</sup> Century Insurgency,” *Parameters*, Winter 2007-08, p. 22.

Events in Iraq in 2003 and 2004 forced some to reconsider this definition, suggesting that it remained too narrow and positing the existence of insurgencies without clearly articulated and widely accepted political goals.”<sup>330</sup> The materialization of an insurgency with few definable goals during SSR operations was significantly problematic and caused institutional paroxysms that reverberate yet today.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century models of insurgent ‘movements’ extant at the beginning of Phase IV of OIF were insufficient for understanding a complex insurgency. This deficiency compromised the Pentagon’s and the U.S. Army’s understanding of and potential solutions to the burgeoning uprising. The traditional model suggested that two handovers should take place: from the military to U.S. and international agencies and from these agencies to host-nation, indigenous forces and organizations. This model would not work in the event that an insurgency developed or if the security situation deteriorated significantly. But, even though an insurgency was developing that seriously disrupted the post-combat calculus of transferring responsibility for SSR operations and few if any host-nation or international agencies were available for operations in Iraq, U.S. policymakers tried to adapt the prevailing model to this circumstance through the transfer of responsibility for stability *and* security to host-nation forces.<sup>331</sup> This solution

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<sup>330</sup> Wright and Reese, op. cit., p. 104. North argues that, “The current JP [Joint Publication] definition worked well in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, when anti-colonial and communist movements were competing with sitting governments for political power. Today, however, it is hard to identify such an organized movement; there are not only movements, but extremists, tribes, gangs, militias, warlords, and combinations of these. These groups are certainly not ‘an organized movement.’ They have different motivations and objectives.” See North, Chris, “Redefining Insurgency,” *Military Review*, January-February, 2008, p. 117.

<sup>331</sup> This policy and the difficulty of implementing it is outlined by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO): “The *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, issued by the National Security Council in November

bypassed the requirement for significant U.S. and international agency support and was premised on the quick (but unlikely) build-up of local capacity. But, as Steven Biddle argues, “turning over responsibility for fighting the insurgents to local forces, in particular, is likely to make matters worse. Such a policy might have made sense in Vietnam, but in Iraq it threatens to exacerbate the communal tensions that underlie the conflict and undermine the power-sharing negotiations needed to end it.”<sup>332</sup> Biddle also argues that “the biggest problem with treating Iraq like Vietnam is Iraqization—the main component of the current U.S. military strategy. In a people’s war, handing the fighting off to local forces makes sense because it undermines the nationalist component of insurgent resistance, improves the quality of local intelligence, and boosts troop strength. But in a communal civil war, it throws gasoline on the fire.”<sup>333</sup> Adapting

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2005, asserted the Coalition’s intention to adjust its ‘posture and approaches as conditions evolve and Iraqi capabilities grow,’ and for Coalition troop levels in Iraq to decrease over time as the Iraqis take on more responsibilities for themselves. Some three months later, in response to the growing capability of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and some other indicators of progress, the Department of Defense (DOD) recommended a decrease in the U.S. force structure in Iraq from 17 to 15 combat brigades—a reduction of about 7,000 troops. Following the bombing of the Golden Mosque of Samarra on February 22, 2006, however, an upsurge in violence throughout the country undermined political gains and challenged the Government of Iraq.” U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Operation Iraqi Freedom: DOD Assessment of Iraqi Security Forces’ Units as Independent not Clear Because Units Support Capabilities are not Fully Developed*, 30 November 2007, p. 1. The realization that this policy was not working led to the development of the *New Way Forward* strategy based on the successful model of “Clear, Hold, and Build” employed by the tactical units of (then) COL McMaster’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment in 2005. See also, Krepinevich, Andrew F., “How to Win in Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2005.

<sup>332</sup> Biddle, Stephen, “Seeing Baghdad, Thinking Saigon”, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2006.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

old models to the current conflict was a natural and understandable response but was nonetheless ineffective for staving off the insurgency or for allowing the withdrawal of U.S. Army forces.

Lessons from previous insurgencies can be useful as a frame of reference but do not necessarily provide key insights into how to conduct SSR operations or conduct a counterinsurgency.<sup>334</sup> In fact, assuming the applicability of lessons from insurgencies that occurred long ago might be more damaging than helpful if improperly understood or applied. Metz argues that analyzing recent internal wars might tell us more about the insurgency in Iraq than do studies of insurgencies from eras past.<sup>335</sup> But the influence of past models and preconceived notions held remarkable sway in shaping policy for Iraq. Given the dearth of historical examples to follow and few workable solutions to combating the insurgency in Iraq, the idea of a handover coupled with withdrawal became more and more attractive, even more so than postulated in initial planning as the levels of violence rose and the security situation worsened. Despite the unsuccessful application of the pre-OIF model to handover and transition operations for nearly three years, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, in a 2006 memorandum, urged “modest withdrawals of U.S. and Coalition forces (start ‘taking our hand off the bicycle seat’) so Iraqis know they have to pull up their socks, step up and take responsibility for their country.”<sup>336</sup> The concept of phasing operations and conducting a handover endured: the preferred handover

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<sup>334</sup> Rosenau argues that 20<sup>th</sup> Century studies of insurgency (Galula, Kitson, Thompson, Lawrence, Gwynn, etc.) remain useful but “it is important to avoid the trap of seeing them as ‘skeleton keys’ of insurgency and counterinsurgency, that is, as tools directly applicable at all times and in all places.” See Rosenau, William, *Subversion and Insurgency*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 17.

<sup>335</sup> Metz, Steven, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Op Cit.

<sup>336</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald H., “Rumsfeld’s Memo of Options for Iraq War,” *New York Times*, 6 November 2006.

model would not die.<sup>337</sup> In the meantime, the U.S. Army would have to manage the situation as it stood in Iraq.

The U.S. Army (as the nation's premier land-based force), despite numerous protestations, was stuck with the task of conducting both stability and security operations simultaneously. The U.S. Army was assigned this task because it occupied the area of operations in force and numbers and because it was the only agency capable (doctrinally and in theory, at least) of providing for both conditions in a complex environment. Despite a decades' long effort (intentional and otherwise) to avoid responsibility for conducting these tasks and an institutional aversion to training for these operations, the U.S. Army would have to quickly find a way to adapt conventional thinking into what was quickly becoming an unconventional assignment with little on-the-ground interagency or international support.

In a sense, the U.S. Army was thrust into a game of musical chairs where there were no other players and the music rarely stopped. Manifold tasks foreign to the organization now became primary missions. The Pentagon reacted in a surprising, but true to form, fashion: "recent experience highlights the need for a force capable of turning one of two 'swift defeat' campaigns, if the President so decides, into an operation seeking more far-reaching objectives. Accomplishing these goals requires agile joint forces capable of rapidly foreclosing an

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<sup>337</sup> The concept of transferring responsibility to an international agency or the host-government, even though the security situation was worsening, was a priority for the Bush administration and reflected the persistent concept of handover and withdrawal after combat: "In 2004, President Bush outlined a five-step plan to end the occupation: transferring sovereignty to an Iraqi interim government, rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure, getting more international support, preparing for Iraq's first national election this past January, and helping to establish security." See Rice, Condoleezza, "Iraq and U.S. Policy," Opening Remarks before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington DC, 19 October 2005.

adversary's options, achieving decisive results in major combat actions, and setting the security conditions for enduring conflict resolution. We must plan for the latter to include extended stability operations involving substantial combat and requiring the rapid and sustained application of national and international capabilities spanning the elements of state power.”<sup>338</sup> The absence of national and international capabilities did not dissuade the Pentagon from pursuing the tenets of a failed model; the durability of the concept of ‘a combat-oriented force is full-spectrum capable’ and the model premised on this farce retained favor among policy-makers years after it was proven invalid.

In late 2005, the Department of Defense did submit to accepting that “stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct and support”<sup>339</sup> but with a rueful caveat: “many stability operations tasks are best performed by indigenous, foreign, or U.S. civilian professionals. Nonetheless, U.S. military forces shall be prepared to perform all necessary tasks to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so. Successfully performing such tasks can help secure a lasting peace and facilitate the timely withdrawal of U.S. and foreign forces.”<sup>340</sup> These statements amount to a tacit admission that the preferred handover model for stability operations was the ideal but did not apply to OIF. This model (if it could be applied) would allow the U.S. Army, and the other joint forces, to continue along the path of developing and enhancing pure combat capabilities. But, despite an interest in making the defunct model work and the presidential order that “the Secretary of State shall

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<sup>338</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald H., *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2005, p. 17.

<sup>339</sup> England, Gordon, *Department of Defense Directive Number 3000.05*, 28 November 2005, p. 2.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities,”<sup>341</sup> the U.S. Army remained the primary agency for conducting these operations on the ground in Iraq. And, “although State, USAID, and DOD have improved the coordination of their capability-building efforts since early 2007” there is still no lead agency charged with post-combat SSR operations or strategic plan to provide overarching guidance.<sup>342</sup> An unusable transition model, the assumptions that flowed from this model, the rise of a complex insurgency, a lack of a coherent strategic plan for interagency support, and a lack of preparation for SSR operations all contributed to a situation requiring radical and rapid organizational adaptation by the U.S. Army.

### **5.3 CONTRACTORS AND THE U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES**

Despite the notable success of unconventional forces linking up with elements of the Kurdish Peshmerga in Northern Iraq, OIF was planned and conducted in a highly and thoroughly conventional manner with combat as its focus. This produced two significant and relatively novel (in scope) changes to the traditional conduct of U.S. Army operations.

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<sup>341</sup> Bush, George, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44, The White House, 7 December 2005, p. 2.

<sup>342</sup> Walker, David M., Stabilizing and Rebuilding Iraq: Serious Challenges Confront U.S. Efforts to Build the Capacity of Iraqi Ministries, Testimony Before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives, GAO, 4 October 2007, p. 4.



First, SF (performing their function in network centric Shock & Awe operations) was specifically used for deep reconnaissance missions and for targeting high-value assets. SF assisted the regular forces in ‘chopping the head off the snake’ so as to thoroughly wrest control of Iraq from Saddam Hussein’s government. SF continued to play this role, in conjunction with regular forces, throughout the combat phases of OIF and even during COIN operations. As Finlan argues, “a great deal of effort was devoted by the occupation forces to hunt down and arrest or kill the former rulers of Iraq...the emphasis in this strategy appeared to revolve around the notion that if you remove the figurehead then the resistance will fade away.”<sup>343</sup> Secondly, the U.S. Army was compelled to supplement its combat-centric forces with contractors performing a number of logistical, training, and personal protection roles formerly executed by special and regular forces. The U.S. Army Transformation program that guaranteed a smaller logistical footprint<sup>344</sup> and greater lethality also necessitated the wide-scale use of contracted support personnel to replace soldiers formerly performing these functions. This problem was exacerbated by the commencement of protracted COIN operations in post-combat Iraq that required even more support personnel (indigenous, foreign, and U.S.) than originally estimated. The use of the SF in a largely conventional role and the employment of a vast network of

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<sup>343</sup> Finlan, Alastair, “Trapped in the Dead Ground: US Counterinsurgency Strategy in Iraq,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Volume 16, Number 1, 2005, p. 10-11.

<sup>344</sup> ““While using PSPs [Private Security Personnel] to overcome fractured alliances, the United States has also relied on PSPs to keep the number of troops deployed to a minimum, using contractors to perform the work of soldiers.” See, Collins, Kevin G., *America’s Mercenaries: War by Proxy*, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 16 June 2006, p. 68.

contracted personnel were indicative of the persistent structural flaws that plagued the U.S. Army throughout OIF.

The reorientation of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), to which SF is subordinate, from supporting geographical commands to “synchronizing Department of Defense plans against global terrorist networks and, as directed, conducting global operations”<sup>345</sup> and the decision by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld to use USSOCOM as the lead agency in the War on Terror (WOT) typified the Pentagon’s bias towards lethal operations.<sup>346</sup> The mission of USSOCOM is to “provide fully capable Special Operations Forces to defend the United States and its interests. Plan and synchronize operations against terrorist networks.”<sup>347</sup> Although there are many unconventional elements inherent to this mission, SF’s supporting role in USSOCOM is distinctively different than its guiding motto: *De Oppresso Liber* (Liberate the Oppressed). Using SF in this fashion was not unnatural (given the organizations’ capabilities) and was a

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<sup>345</sup> USSOCOM, Title 10 Authorities and Responsibilities, <http://www.socom.mil/SOCOMHome/Pages/USSOCOM.aspx>, accessed 23 May 2009.

<sup>346</sup> “ARSOF [Army Special Operations Forces] support the WOT [War on Terror] by providing forces trained and equipped to support the USSOCOM effort to the WOT. ARSOF support the USSOCOM’s strategy for winning the WOT by conducting SO [Special Operations] to find, fix, and finish terrorists globally. ARSOF employ their forces to shape the global informational and geographic operational environment by conducting SO to influence, deter, locate, isolate, and destroy terrorists and their support systems.” Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-05, Army Special Operations Forces, Washington DC, 20 September 2006, pp. 1-1—1-2.

<sup>347</sup> USSOCOM, Mission Statement, [http://www.socom.mil/Docs/Command\\_Mission\\_26112007](http://www.socom.mil/Docs/Command_Mission_26112007), accessed on 20 May 2009.

logical extension of the conventionalization of SF since the end of the Vietnam War.<sup>348</sup> In fact, by the mid- to late-1990s, U.S. Army Special Forces had adapted to their more lethal and less unconventional role in support of conventional operations: “in the fall of 1998, Major General William Boykin, the commander of US Army Special Forces Command, directed Special Forces group commanders to examine the relevance of UW [Unconventional Warfare] as a mission. The 3<sup>rd</sup> group, whose response was not atypical, concluded that UW skill sets had atrophied to the point that troops were far more comfortable conducting SR [Special Reconnaissance] or DA [Direct Action] missions.”<sup>349</sup>

Using SF in a more conventional and lethal manner required that the unconventional capabilities of these forces be supplemented or replicated by conventional forces and/or contractors. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld described what the then current and future SF would be capable of and how this would affect general purpose forces: “the future special operations force will be rapidly deployable, agile, flexible and tailorable to perform the most demanding and sensitive missions worldwide. As general purpose joint ground forces take on tasks that SOF currently perform, SOF will increase their capacity to perform more demanding and specialized tasks, especially long-duration, indirect and clandestine operations in politically sensitive environments and denied areas. For direct action, they will possess an expanded

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<sup>348</sup> “The ‘art’ of conducting UW [Unconventional Warfare] has been rarely practiced by most western SOF since the early years of the Vietnam War, and had largely become a ‘legacy mission’ de-emphasized in favour of other operational priorities.” Brailey, Malcolm, *Not Many Jobs Take a Whole Army: Special Operations Forces and the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore, March 2004, p. 14.

<sup>349</sup> Watts, Clinton, *Foreign Fighters: How are they being Recruited? Two Imperfect Recruitment Models*, 22 June 2008, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/06/foreign-fighters-how-are-they/>, accessed 28 July 2008.

organic ability to locate, tag and track dangerous individuals and other high-value targets locally.”<sup>350</sup> But Special Forces are ‘Special’ for a reason: they are capable of conducting operations (particularly unconventional operations) that other individual soldiers or conventional organizations are incapable of performing. As Bogart contends, “some may think that any quality unit can remake themselves into UW experts. Our nation has a large kitbag full of organizations with different capabilities and cultures. Most of those capabilities in the conventional forces as well as most of the special operations units are strike-focused. Each force package can bring different capabilities to the fight. Only SOF soldiers are recruited, assessed, trained, equipped, and organized primarily to fight the UW mission—*by, with, and through* others.”<sup>351</sup>

Shifting responsibility to the regular forces for many unconventional operations and leveraging contractors for conventional operations directly contributed to the U.S. Army’s inability to appropriately train and array its forces for stability operations: “one of the most surprising aspects of the employment of Green Berets and other overt Special Forces was the deliberate decision not to use them in their key roles—training indigenous forces—to help reconstruct a new Iraqi Army after Saddam’s army was controversially disbanded by the new pro-consul, Paul Bremer on 23 May 2003. Allocating the task to Special Forces would have allowed much better bonding and trust to develop between the coalition forces and the new army. Instead, this task was given to private contractors and, ironically, not only did it squander this

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<sup>350</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald H., Quadrennial Defense Review Report, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 6 February 2006, pp. 43-44.

<sup>351</sup> Bogart III, Adrian, One Valley at a Time, Joint Special Operations University Report 06-6, Hurlburt Field, FL, 2006, p. 5.

opportunity, but it also lured many Special Forces out of the coalition forces to take ‘lucrative jobs’ as contractors in Iraq.”<sup>352</sup> In this respect, Transformation was truly transformative: SF was being used to direct precision-guided munitions in support of network centric operations while the rest of the U.S. Army, supported by contract personnel, was trying to master skills almost completely outside of its competency.

Contractors filled a variety of positions in Iraq previously occupied by uniformed personnel: personal protection; patrolling; training; facility management and; theater network management and maintenance (to name a few). Principally, contractors supported the U.S. Army by performing significant stability operations functions and by performing various non-combat operations. “The types and roles of private contractors vary widely, and there can be few hard-and-fast rules regarding their use. They have proved their value to the U.S. military through under-taking some tasks whose performance by uniformed personnel would detract from skills and training of those personnel—e.g., catering and logistical transport in noncombat areas.”<sup>353</sup> Without contracted support, the U.S. Army would be incapable of conducting many networked combat functions that rely on sophisticated communications and computer networks; operations in a post-combat environment would be nearly impossible. Metz argues, “like contracting in general, PMCs [Private Military Contractors] free uniformed service members for

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<sup>352</sup> Finlan, Alastair, *Special Forces, Strategy, and the War on Terror: Warfare by Other Means*, Routledge, London, 2008, p. 156.

<sup>353</sup> RAND, *Integrating Instruments of Power and Influence: Lessons Learned and Best Practices*, Santa Monica, 2008, p. 38.

other tasks.”<sup>354</sup> Contracting not only freed uniformed services for other tasks (mostly combat related) but also enabled operations in general.

The expanded use of contractors (particularly personal protection contractors) in stability operations was accompanied by many unforeseen problems related to a lack of “well-defined requirements, poor business arrangements, and inadequate oversight and accountability.”<sup>355</sup> These contractors did not significantly contribute to the U.S. Army’s effort to stabilize Iraq and indeed, might have contributed to a number of incidents (like the 16 September 2007 *Blackwater* shootings in Baghdad) that led to condemnation of not only their efforts but of the U.S. government effort in general. The failure to plan, resource, and train the U.S. Army for stability operations and the shifting of many unconventional tasks to the conventional forces necessitated the use of contractors even though the rules and regulations governing their behavior and the scope of their operations were thin or non-existent. The use of contractors and a general lack of unconventional support from SF were symptoms of the transformed force; the length and depth of their use were emblematic of the Transformation pathology that made healthy adaptation that much more difficult to achieve.

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<sup>354</sup> Metz, Steven, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Op Cit, p. 35.

<sup>355</sup> Walker, David M., “Stabilizing and Rebuilding Iraq: Actions Needed to Address Inadequate Accountability over U.S. Efforts and Investments,” Testimony Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, GAO, 11 March 2008, p. 1.

## 5.4 DOCTRINAIRE DOCTRINE

As stated previously, the purpose of doctrine is to provide fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.<sup>356</sup> Doctrine not only acts as a guide but is informed by actions and learning from operational experience. “Depending on the process by which it is written, formal published doctrine can reflect either the *goals* of the military leadership (a ‘top-down’ dissemination) or broad *institutional learning* (a ‘bottom-up’ system) derived from real operational experience. In either case, such doctrine reflects institutional learning when it is well aligned with education, training, and actual operational behavior.”<sup>357</sup> It is perhaps normal then doctrine is more likely read during peacetime than during war since during war individuals and units are contributing to and influencing doctrine more so than practicing it.<sup>358</sup>

Doctrine, by nature, does not change very often or rapidly. If it did, few individuals or organizations would have the ability to learn, inculcate, and train on its principles. As such, doctrine can act as a record of organizational predilections and inhibitions as it charts changes (or a lack thereof) in an organization. The durability of doctrine and the standardization that it provides to units can be either good or bad depending on the guidance that is contained therein and the environment where this guidance is exercised. But when doctrine is inflexible, is incompatible with other doctrine (either because of date of publication or contradicting

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<sup>356</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, Op Cit, p. 171.

<sup>357</sup> Davidson, Janine Anne, Op Cit, p. 224.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid, p. 227.

principles) or does not change rapidly enough to be applicable in operations where the prescriptions contained therein are being implemented, organizational adaptation can suffer. Although doctrine is only meant to be a guide to the conduct of operations and training for these operations, when enforced by regulations, doctrine becomes doctrinaire and a barrier to change.<sup>359</sup>

U.S. Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, in publication throughout OIF and most recently updated in 2007, offers guidance on training and leader development throughout the force: “leaders must understand how their unit will operate and fight across the full range of military operations, and how to plan and execute training using FM 7-0 and FM 7-1. Training must be innovative, yet doctrinally and technically sound. Leaders must enforce individual, collective, and unit performance standards.”<sup>360</sup> To properly follow the guidance of this regulation, leaders and trainers have to subordinate innovative training to doctrinal principles and must ensure that training is standardized, to the degree possible, across the force. Additionally, training must also

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<sup>359</sup> An additional problem with doctrine, as Kiszely argues, is that “some aspects of our doctrine are liable to be out of date almost from the day of publication.” This is particularly true in rapidly changing or poorly understood environments. The writing of doctrine takes time: lessons and learning must be captured and are usually standardized; writing and review is a time consuming process for any sizable document. See Kiszely, John, *Op Cit*, p. 14. Kilcullen makes a similar argument regarding methods in counterterrorism: “counterterrorism methods that work are almost by definition already obsolete: our opponents evolve as soon as we master their current approach. There is no ‘silver bullet’; like malaria, terrorism constantly morphs into new mutations that require a continuously updated battery of responses.” Kilcullen, David, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009, p. 294.

<sup>360</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, Washington, DC, 3 August 2007, p. 72.



adhere to U.S. Army standards: “the basis for training standardization is executing training using approved Army publications. While ensuring tasks are performed to Army standards, commanders encourage trainers to exercise initiative and to create realistic and challenging conditions for training within the context of mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops available and civilians.”<sup>361</sup> Finally, trainers and leaders must ensure that training is evaluated according to a predetermined standard: “every training event includes an evaluation of task performance to standard, whether formal or informal, by internal personnel or external.”<sup>362</sup> Unless doctrine, standards, and evaluation techniques are indisputably appropriate for all scenarios, innovation and initiative will suffer. But if doctrine, standards, and evaluation techniques are universally appropriate, then the need for innovation and initiative is obviated. Innovation is thus impeded by the principles of available doctrine, rote standardization, and an inflexible evaluation methodology. This does not mean that innovation is not possible but it does mean that innovation will have significant limits placed upon it by the requirements of standardization and the principles of doctrine. When encountering or reacting to a new environment or environmental phenomenon (such as a complex insurgency or even the requirement to conduct stability operations) restrictions on innovation can significantly reduce the capacity for adaptation.<sup>363</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> Lopez argues that “in some cases, regulations even contradict emerging doctrine further preventing its acceptance. U.S. Forces Command’s regulation 350-1, which prescribes training requirements for active duty units assigned to the continental United States, prohibits the use of training resources for stability operations outside of a 90-day window of deployment to avoid any distraction from the unit’s primary warfighting activities.” Lopez,

Army Regulation (AR) 220-1, Unit Status Reporting (USR), also limits the innovative capacity of U.S. Army units by prescribing mostly quantitative and combat relevant assessments for determining a unit's operational fitness. The USR does use a few qualitative measurements, provided by the tactical unit commander, to assess readiness but these are based on sub-unit performance of standard and doctrinal mission essential tasks. Core tasks or core mission essential tasks (core METs) are identified by the commander "by using the procedures in FM 7-1 chapter 3, to develop a mission essential task list (METL) for the mission(s) which the unit was organized or designed to doctrinally perform."<sup>364</sup> Thus, a unit's tasks are limited to organization and doctrine: if the unit is organized for a variant of combat or combat support, then its core tasks will be combat or combat support related. Accordingly, the cognitive structures of the unit will reflect a bias towards conducting either combat or combat support operations.

In the event that a unit receives a warning order for an upcoming mission or an execution order for the conduct of a mission, the commander will have to draw from another set of preconceived tasks to fill out unit training for the directed mission.<sup>365</sup> Reporting on the unit's ability to accomplish these tasks and thus its preparedness for combat (or for whatever the unit was organized or designed to doctrinally perform) is a measurement that forces the commander of a unit to restrict training to prescribed, doctrinal tasks that might or might not contribute to the

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Rafael, *On Learning: Metrics Based Systems for Countering Asymmetric Threats*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 25 May 2006, p. 29.

<sup>364</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 220-1, Unit Status Reporting, Washington DC, 19 December 2006, p. 63.

<sup>365</sup> Directed mission tasks are also known as (DMETs). "The commander identifies directed mission tasks or DMETs when his unit has been formally directed by a formal warning order (WARNORD), execution order (EXORD), or other formal tasking from HQDA [Headquarters, Department of the Army]..." Ibid.

unit's effectiveness and adaptability in a given environment. This is particularly true for units that are called upon to deploy and conduct tasks that do not fit its doctrinal organization or design. Thus, the following statement from Field Manual 1, The Army, is largely invalid: "the versatile mix of Army organizations provides combatant commanders with the landpower necessary to achieve objectives across the range of military operations."<sup>366</sup> The U.S. Army lacked a significant and applicable set of doctrinal guidelines or organizational types to conduct protracted stability operations in a complex insurgency environment. The training and tasks necessary for operations in this type of environment did not exist (certainly not comprehensively) prior to the publication of Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency, in 2006 (and much later in Field Manual (FM) 3-07, Stability Operations, September 2008) and could not be easily derived from the conventional task set trained upon prior to and during the operations in OIF.

While doctrine does change to reflect strategic, operational, and tactical realities and lessons, elements of older doctrine (forming the historical basis of the document) might remain and might conflict with updated guidance. Field Manual (FM) 2-0, Intelligence (published 1 year after the commencement of OIF), describes how intelligence influences operations: "the commander must understand how current and potential enemies organize, equip, train, employ, and control their forces. Intelligence provides an understanding of the enemy, which assists in planning, preparing, and executing military operations...commanders must receive the intelligence, understand it (because it is tailored to the commander's requirements), believe it, and act on it. Through this doctrinal concept, intelligence drives operations."<sup>367</sup> FM 2-0 also

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<sup>366</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 1, The Army, June 2005, p. 1-2.

<sup>367</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 2-0, Intelligence, May 2004, P. 1-1—1-2.

explains how contemporary adversaries might adapt to U.S. Army capabilities: “if the US can dominate an adversary through its size or technological organization, and strategic capabilities, the adversary will resort to unconventional and adaptive ways and means to achieve his ends, which may themselves change at times.”<sup>368</sup> But the recognition of new adversaries does not displace traditional models or methods of combating these enemies. Guidance provided by FM 2-0 on post-conflict operations indicates that, “upon cessation of hostilities or truce, deployed forces enter a new stage of force projection operations. Postconflict operations focus on restoring order, reestablishing HN infrastructure, preparing for redeployment of forces, and planning residual presence of US forces. While post conflict operations strive to transition from conflict to peace, there remains a possibility of resurgent hostilities by individuals and forces.”<sup>369</sup> Guidance provided by FM 2-0 also defines the role of tactical level forces in these operations, “the tactical level is the employment of units in combat. It includes the ordered arrangement and maneuver of units in relation to each other, the terrain, and the enemy to translate potential combat power into victorious battles and engagements.”<sup>370</sup>

Three problems emerge from this analysis of FM 2-0 that are suggestive of a general doctrinal infirmity that affected the prosecution of missions in the non-linear, non-doctrinal, and tactically ambiguous environment present in OIF: 1) the intelligence collected for the commander to drive operations is drawn from equipment, training, methods, and indicators constructed for supporting combat operations; 2) the model presented for the conduct of post-conflict operations still presumes a linear path leading from combat to order to withdrawal even

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<sup>368</sup> Ibid, p. 1-19.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid, p. 1-38.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid, p. 2-1.

though the potential for ‘resurgent hostilities’ is recognized and; 3) the focus of intelligence at the tactical level is on combat and the translation of potential combat power into victorious battles and engagements. Although lessons from OIF (and OEF) were incorporated in FM 2-0, the bias towards traditional models and combat remained. Doctrine that does not properly reflect the realities of ongoing operations limits the commander’s ability to innovate (because of the restrictions posed by regulations and standards), to train appropriately for the mission, and to properly function once in theater. In essence, the commander will face serious challenges when adapting to the operational environment when he or she is forced to follow guidelines constructed for phased combat operations relevant to a different era.

The doctrinal guidance provided prior to and during OIF was developed for an enemy and an operational environment where linearity prevailed and uniformity was the norm. In a previous era, strict adherence to doctrine and regulations ensured that units would be successful in a linear fight against a similarly doctrinal foe. Because new doctrine builds upon old doctrine (too dramatic of a shift would disrupt the institutional balance of learning, training, equipment, etc.) and because doctrine is resistant to change (as is the institution producing the doctrine), the concepts contained in formal doctrinal guidance persist even when circumstance and objectives change. Thus, doctrine can be detrimental to training and operations if adhered to strictly. Despite the definition of what doctrine is (a principled guide), when enforced by regulations and standardization, doctrine confines the adaptive capacity of a unit and of individuals. Inappropriate doctrine, such as that available throughout a large portion of OIF, premised on conventional combat-oriented operations, not only forced significant adaptation but, perversely, restricted the range of adaptation that was possible.

## 5.5 TRANSFORMATION IN A TIME OF WAR

The U.S. Army's Transformation program continued throughout OIF, largely unchanged, in spite of countervailing lessons emerging from two ongoing operations (OIF and OEF) and despite the fact that the character of these operations seriously challenged the direction and underlying premises of this program.<sup>371</sup> Partly, this was a result of bureaucratic inertia: "the capabilities of armies and the individuals who lead them are defined by the types of problems tackled in the past, the nature of which are shaped by the characteristics of the institutional culture in which the armies and their leadership have historically evolved."<sup>372</sup> Furthermore, the U.S. Army's Transformation program did not 'transform' because it was encumbered by budgetary constraints and a planning and acquisition system that would not or could not be quickly altered despite notable challenges to the efficacy of the program for current (and possibly) future operations.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> The Department of the Army continued to advance the full-spectrum concept of the Transformation effort even after the difficulties encountered in OEF and OIF: "Transformation is a process that shapes the changing nature of military competition and cooperation through new combinations of concepts, capabilities, people and organizations. These combinations employ the nation's advantages and protect against asymmetric vulnerabilities to sustain the U.S. strategic position, which helps underpin peace and stability in the world." Brownlee, R. L., 2004 Army Transformation Roadmap, Department of the Army, July 2004, p. 1-3.

<sup>372</sup> MacGregor, Douglas A., Transformation Under Fire, Praeger, Westport, CT, 2003, p. 200.

<sup>373</sup> The efficacy of the Transformation effort was questioned in 2002: "For the future, a key question about the office [the office of Force Transformation] is whether it will have enough influence to effectively alter the direction of the rest of the department. DoD agencies and the military services traditionally have been skeptical of radical transformation, preferring slower evolutionary development. The extent to which the OFT forces change on an inertia-filled profession will be the key on which its success will be judged." So far, the verdict would indicate

The durability of the U.S. Army's Transformation program was bolstered by two intersecting suppositions regarding the deterrent capacity of the force as it was then formed and the applicability of this force in achieving victory as it was then defined. The former assumed that the superiority of the conventional force deterred competition from other hostile states and actors. "The US military is so successful in waging conventional war that America's adversaries are, at present, seeking shelter at the extreme ends of the conflict spectrum. At the high end, states like Iran and North Korea are actively pursuing nuclear arsenals. At the lower end, hostile groups such as al Qaeda, the Taliban, remnants of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime, splinter Iraqi Shi'a elements and similar groups pursue insurgency warfare."<sup>374</sup> The other supposition was that the declared policy of victory in the war on terror (a carryover concept related to the total victory in regular war and in low intensity conflict) was achievable with existing means.<sup>375</sup> Even though the U.S. Army encountered significant problems executing missions to support strategic priorities in Iraq with the extant, partially transformed force, changing the trajectory of future Transformation was unlikely. Planners were still wedded to the idea of accepting risk at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict, especially if risks at the higher end could be deterred with the existing conventional force or the even more lethal and future fully transformed force.

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that OFT has not been particularly successful in this effort. See Center for Defense Information, DoD Office of Force Transformation, 11 September 2002.

<sup>374</sup> Krepinevich, Andrew, The War in Iraq: The Nature of Insurgency Warfare, CBSA, 2 June 2004, p. 2.

<sup>375</sup> Metz, Steven, "Winning the War by Winning the Peace: Strategy for Conflict and Post-Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," Ed. Matthews, Lloyd J, Conference Report for the Fifteenth Annual Strategy Conference, Carlisle, PA, 13-15 April, 2004.

These two suppositions disregarded challenges posed by the growing Iraqi insurgency (as well as the one festering in Afghanistan) and by the force itself. As Lyall and Wilson argue, “modern armies will be chronically unprepared to defeat insurgencies that may arise after military interventions. Paradoxically, the mechanized force structures of modern militaries may contribute not just to the rise of insurgent opposition but may actually embolden it. Insurgents, now thoroughly versed in the limits of mechanized forces, have incentives to adopt ‘primitive’ strategies that pit the strengths of the modern state against itself.”<sup>376</sup> Douglas MacGregor argues that the U.S. Army encountered various problems in Iraq *because* of a Transformation program that is “not informed by the realities of modern combat or rigorous testing and experimentation.”<sup>377</sup> MacGregor also argues that the various assumptions underpinning Transformation (the requirements of strategic deployment speed, perfect situational awareness, utility of a lighter force, and the efficacy of the reduced size of units) are delusional, detrimental to the current force, and will likely lead to more problems in the future.<sup>378</sup>

Transformation also did little to assist tactical units in the prosecution of stability operations in Iraq after the completion of major combat operations despite claims of enabling full-spectrum operations.<sup>379</sup> To be full-spectrum, the U.S. Army would necessarily have to be

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<sup>376</sup> Lyall, Jason and Isaiah Wilson III, “Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars,” *International Organization*, Number 63, Winter, 2009, p. 103.

<sup>377</sup> MacGregor, Douglas, *Army Transformation: Implications for the Future*, Statement before the House Armed Services Committee, 15 July 2004, p. 2.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>379</sup> Douglas Feith’s testimony to Congress fully demonstrates the persistence of the Pentagon’s faith in Transformation despite a year’s worth of lessons from Iraq: “military effectiveness in an age of terrorism and asymmetric warfare is no longer measured simply by the industrial-age concept of mass, but rather by more



capable of conducting not just combat operations but also stability and support operations and to link these operations with national, political objectives. Kagan argues that the Transformation effort accomplished just the opposite and merely augmented the military's conventional capacity: "the history of U.S. military transformation efforts since the end of the Cold War has been the continuous movement away from the political objective of war toward a focus on killing and destroying things."<sup>380</sup> Comments from three soldiers deployed to OIF illustrate how the transformed force structure affected units (organizationally, functionally, and in training) prior to and immediately after the conclusion of combat operations and how the Transformation program failed to enable full-spectrum capabilities:

*"Prior to OIF 1, the regiment focused mainly on high intensity conflict...The majority of our training occurred at the Joint Multi-Readiness Center (JMRC) in Germany. There was some sparse LIC training conducted at the unit level but very little time dedicated to COIN."*<sup>381</sup>

*"We spent almost a month in Kuwait. For the majority of that time, the Brigade Commander was trying to sign us up for a mission. We didn't have a mission."*

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advanced concepts like speed, stealth, reach, knowledge, precision, and lethality." Feith, Douglas J., Strengthening U.S. Global Defense Posture, Report to Congress, September 2004, p. 6.

<sup>380</sup> Kagan, Frederick W., Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy, Encounter Books, 2006, p. 358. Nowhere was the aim of Transformation, despite the character of the opposing force, better emphasized and revealed than during the controversial Millennium Challenge 2002 exercises.

<sup>381</sup> Soldier Deployed to Baghdad (March 2003-August 2003 and November 2004-November 2005), Personal Interview, 1 July 2008.

*Finally, they said that we've been getting these caches of weapons and we don't know what to do with it and you guys know how to handle ammunition and by the way, you have a ton of trucks, so we are going to send you up there with all your trucks and personnel and you guys are going to blow stuff up.”<sup>382</sup>*

*“The ground-pounders were not very educated on non-lethal effects and second and third order effects of what they were doing. They were very, very good at what they were trained at: light infantry tactics and how to go out and kill the enemy. Their briefings before patrols were significantly different than ours. They were much more willing to open fire and ask questions later instead of thinking about the situation.”<sup>383</sup>*

The need to adapt in Iraq was apparent and the scope of this adaptation defied, almost in its entirety, the direction of the Transformation effort. Colin Gray argues that: “there is a traditional American way of war that, in some respects, encourages a military style far from optimal as an approach to the challenges posed by irregular enemies. I am not quite arguing that the American way of war, a style reflecting cultural influences, will thwart the ambitions for transformation, though there are grounds for anxiety in this regard.”<sup>384</sup> Additionally, Gray concludes that “the strategic surprises that have ambushed U.S. national security performance

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<sup>382</sup> Soldier deployed to Baghdad (early 2003, 2006-2007), Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> Gray, Colin S., *National Security Dilemmas: Challenges & Opportunities*, Potomac Books, Washington DC, 2009, p. 214.

overwhelmingly have been political, not military, in kind. Military transformation is close to irrelevant to the real problem that persistently constrains the value of U.S. strategic prowess.”<sup>385</sup> The surprises that unfolded in Iraq and the process of the U.S. Army’s adaptation to these surprises (in its effort to realize national objectives) are the subject of the next chapter.

## 5.6 CONCLUSIONS

The end of combat operations and the failed transition to stability operations in Iraq revealed significant shortcomings in the U.S. Army’s ability to translate battlefield victory into strategic success. The conventional, combat-oriented structure (and the cascading effects of this structure on training, cognition, perception, etc.) that served the U.S. Army well during combat operations persisted throughout OIF and made the transition to SSR operations in the midst of a complex insurgency much more difficult to achieve. The inflexibility of this structure and its inappropriateness for SSR operations in OIF revealed manifold deficiencies in the force for achieving strategic objectives and necessitated significant adaptation:

- Combat readiness did not translate into full spectrum dominance and enduring stability does not flow from success in combat. A failure to train for stability did not obviate the responsibility for providing it; failing to prepare necessitated significant adaptation to achieve organizational goals.

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<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

- In the event of a complex insurgency emerging during SSR operations, options for a handoff (to U.S., UN, or indigenous agencies) might not exist, particularly if initial stability and security is not provisioned. These missions cannot be neatly separated in a complex insurgency environment and the U.S. Army had to (and likely will have to) assume responsibility for this task and all attendant sub-tasks.
- Utilizing unconventional forces for intensified conventional operations and supplementing regular forces with support contractors further restricted the capacity of the U.S. Army to conduct SSR operations.
- Doctrine reinforced structure and provided only a limited range of options for adaptation (because of regulations, standards, evaluation methodology, etc.). Doctrine (and the structures supporting doctrine) does not change easily or rapidly. The cognitive patterns derived from doctrine are also resistant to change.
- U.S. Army Transformation did not address the realities and necessities of achieving strategic success as it has been defined post-9/11: the capability of the force was more in tune with a single band of the spectrum of combat than it was to the whole spectrum. This capability was not readily fungible.

What was dismissed in Transformation and marginalized in doctrine and training quickly became fundamental to the success of U.S. Army operations. As Thomas Mockaitis claims, “The U.S. military response to the insurgency in Iraq has been profoundly shaped by preinvasion policy decisions, its own historical experience, and American culture. Despite some very promising initiatives and a genuine effort to make the best of an extremely difficult situation, these factors limited the effectiveness of the counterinsurgency campaign during its first

year.”<sup>386</sup> Fonetnot argues that “these operations challenged the Army’s existing capabilities and exposed obsolescence in the AirLand Battle doctrine. Meeting the new reality with a smaller force, equipped and proficient in a doctrine that was increasingly outdated and overcome by the changing security environment, forced solutions that were innovative, if occasionally painful or disastrous.”<sup>387</sup>

Although adaptation, particularly in warfare, is a matter of course, the adaptation required for success in Iraq was considerable. The effects of past policy decisions and the course of Transformation all affected the rate and scope of the adaptive effort. And, because SSR operations in Iraq were largely if not wholly the province of tactical units in contact with the population and the insurgency, these effects were magnified: the tail would have to wag the dog if adaptation was to occur and objectives were to be achieved. The net result of antecedent conditions and structural persistence was the reactive sequence of tactical units participating in OIF charted in the following chapter.

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<sup>386</sup> Mockaitis, Thomas R., *The Iraq War: Learning from the Past, Adapting to the Present, and Planning for the Future*, Op Cit, p. 36.

<sup>387</sup> Fontenot, Gregory, et al, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom through 01 May 2003*, Op Cit, p. 11.

## 6.0 REACTIVE SEQUENCE: U.S. ARMY ADAPTATION

*“Adapt or perish, now as ever, is nature’s inexorable imperative.”—H.G. Wells*

An ideal organizational form is perfectly suited to accomplishing organizational goals and missions in any environment and against any competitor. The ideal organization is also perfectly situated to take advantage of any opportunities presented by changing environmental stimuli or organizational defects (in training, execution, learning, etc.) revealed by a competitor. But each degree that an organization is separated from the ideal type necessitates adaptation for the achievement of organizational goals and missions: an adjustment of inputs, outputs, or both. Because an organization is unlikely to be ideal for any given environment or against any particular competitor it must therefore maintain a capacity for adaptation if it is to remain a going concern.

For the U.S. Army, particularly during periods of deployment to hostile and unpredictable environments, the pace of sub-unit adaptation varies but occurs fastest in units in contact with the threat environment. If an adaptation is successful, it might be transmitted from the bottom up through the rest of the organization.<sup>388</sup> This decentralized change occurs by

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<sup>388</sup> This is not to say that the adaptation will be accepted or implemented by the institution as a whole. The adaptation made by one unit may not be applicable to other units because of differing variables in other localized environments. As one soldier noted, “sometimes, the lessons we learned in Iraq were not applicable even when we

necessity, because the larger institution cannot adjust rapidly enough to have a timely effect on sub-organization performance and goal realization, and because “centralized control of change requires time for study, dissemination, and implementation of new ideas.”<sup>389</sup> Intimacy with the environment, basic survival instincts, and direct responsibility for achieving organizational goals all influence the pace at which the unit in contact adapts. Because these organizations are smaller sub-parts of the larger institutional Army and are charged with implementing organizational missions, they are required and tend to be readily capable of making quick adjustments to their immediate inputs and outputs. This typically occurs without significant changes to resourcing patterns and in spite of potential organizational interference with the adaptive process.<sup>390</sup> For its part, the larger institution has its greatest proactive effect on tactical organizations prior to deployment via organizational design, training, education, and by the establishment of rules and norms governing behavior. Conversely, the institution tends to be reactive when tactical level organizations are deployed in an operational environment. If and when the institution does modify its behavior, it does so based on cues received from units in contact with the environment and the enemy. The more separated from the ideal that the organization is, the longer the lag time between recognition of these cues and the implementation of corrective changes to organizational design and procedures.

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returned to the same AOR after a period of time. And, sometimes, the lessons we learned were not applicable across geography. The situation is too fluid to apply lessons across the board.”

<sup>389</sup> Doubler, Michael D., *Closing with the Enemy: How GIs Fought the War in Europe: 1944-1945*, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, KS, 1994, p. 280.

<sup>390</sup> Organizational interference can have a negative effect on how subordinate units adapt if the larger organization, either deliberately or unintentionally, impedes adaptation through the imposition of rules, procedures, etc., that limit adaptation.

Since adaptation occurs most rapidly in smaller units that are in contact with the environment and the enemy, the reverse must also be true: the further removed a unit or organizational sub-level is away from the environment and the enemy, the slower the pace of its adaptation. Because the U.S. Army is a large, hierarchical organization, it has many organizational levels that are only tangentially connected to the operational environment and the enemy, if they are connected at all. Thus, large portions of the institution are either not compelled to adapt or have little internal impetus for doing so. This can have an effect on organizational design and resourcing and the institution's perception of how appropriate or inappropriate an organizational form is for achieving its goals and missions. This disconnect can prove disastrous if the institution (as a whole or through its leadership) is incapable or unwilling to modify itself for the achievement of organizational goals and missions.

Combat or the employment of the U.S. Army in an operation is one telling way to test the appropriateness of organizational design for the achievement of organizational goals and missions. Experiential data is derived from testing the organization in an operational environment and can be used to guide and implement broad organizational changes. Through the employment of tactical units in a particular environment and against a particular adversary for the achievement of organizational goals and missions, the institution can discover how separated its design is from the ideal organizational form. In this sense, the tactical organization, if in contact either in combat or in other operations, can and often times does drive organizational change. This is precisely what happened as the U.S. Army struggled with adapting its combat-oriented force to manifold OOTW and against a variety of threats during OIF. But, ironically, the pace of adaptation of the U.S. Army in OIF was significantly retarded by its initial organizational design and by the changes wrought by the Transformation program.



Any organizational change had to be driven by tactical learning and adaptation: the U.S. Army as an institution was too far detached from the realities and necessities of full spectrum operations. Tactical unit adaptation was the result of a reactive sequence among tactical units, the environment, and the enemy and reflected the degree of organizational separation from the ideal type.

Tactical unit adaptations are instructive for the force in general when the force is employed in a foreign, unanticipated environment. The further removed from the ideal organizational form, the more likely that successful small unit tactical adaptations will drive centralized *and* decentralized organizational adaptation. Nagl and Yingling describe how this reactive process transpired in Iraq: “not surprisingly, our adaptation to COIN began at the lowest echelons of the Army and is working its way to the top. As early mid- to late 2003, individuals and small units deploying to Iraq recognized the need to prepare for COIN. Battalion and company commanders designed training exercises to replicate conditions their soldiers would face in Iraq. These small-unit adaptations were soon incorporated into brigade-level mission-rehearsal exercises and combat training center rotations. Somewhat belatedly, institutional training within the Army began to shift the focus away from MCO [Major Combat Operations] toward COIN. By 2006, most branches redesigned their officer and noncommissioned officer training courses to include more COIN scenarios. The COIN academies in Taji, Iraq, and Fort Leavenworth, Kan., now transmit lessons learned to units deploying to Iraq. Information technology has enabled units in battle to pass on lessons learned to units preparing for deployment. These informal and formal feedback mechanisms have ensured that pre-deployment training is tough and realistic.”<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Nagl, John A. and Paul L. Yingling, Op Cit.

This progression is not atypical. Michael Doubler argues that this process occurred in WWII as the combined arms team “had to overcome problems in its own training, equipment, and organization. Flawed prewar doctrine for the employment of certain combat formations and weapon systems was identified and corrected. The American Army proved unusually adroit in modifying its composition and practices with new tactical techniques, technological innovations, and organizational changes. Only by adapting under combat conditions was the Army able to overcome the enemy.”<sup>392</sup>

The U.S. Army’s combat-focused design overwhelmingly (and negatively) influenced the amount of adaptation required during OIF. The process of adaptation began in May 2003 when OIF “became a ‘full spectrum’ campaign requiring the simultaneous use of lethal and non-lethal measures in an attempt to achieve US national objectives.”<sup>393</sup> At this point, “the US Army found itself in a conflict for which it was less than well prepared.”<sup>394</sup> In fact, the only significant preparation and institutional familiarity the U.S. Army had for and with the conduct of full spectrum operations was the experiential skills and knowledge gleaned from previous (but less complex) OOTW in the preceding decade. Wright and Reese argue that “the Army’s experiences in Somalia and Haiti, and its ongoing rotations in Bosnia and Kosovo, created a core group of officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs)...with experience in conducting various types of stability and support operations. Indeed, by the end of 2002, tens of thousands of American Soldiers had participated in either SFOR or KFOR. This fact is important to the

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<sup>392</sup> Doubler, Michael D., Op Cit, p. 3.

<sup>393</sup> Wright and Reese, Op Cit, p. 49.

<sup>394</sup> Wright and Reese, Ibid.

understanding of the US Army's approach to operations in Iraq after May 2003.”<sup>395</sup> Units in Iraq reacted initially by trying to apply experiential knowledge gained from the prosecution of MOOTW to the environment and enemy encountered in Iraq but did so with only modest returns:

*“To be fair, we went in with the wrong model. We went in thinking Bosnia and Kosovo. SFOR and KFOR do not work in an environment where you have been the one that has upset the entire balance of power in the country.”*<sup>396</sup>

But even if the U.S. Army had been well disposed to conducting complex full spectrum operations the challenges that it faced in OIF would have been daunting: OIF was not merely a sequenced full spectrum operation; it was *simultaneously* full spectrum and thus required a fusing of full spectrum capabilities that did not exist in either the regular or reserve forces.<sup>397</sup>

The difficulty posed by a fairly rapid transition from combat operations into simultaneous full spectrum operations was exacerbated by an institutional and government-wide

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<sup>395</sup> Wright and Reese, Op Cit., p. 64.

<sup>396</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion (September 2002-August 2003) and Baghdad (January 2005-January 2006), Personal Interview, 8 October 2008.

<sup>397</sup> Geren and Casey argue that the reserve components of the U.S. Army “have found themselves assigned missions for which they were not originally intended nor adequately resourced.” Although the reserve components of the U.S. Army do maintain many of the skills necessary for the conduct of full spectrum operations, these units, like their active counterparts, were by no means designed or prepared for type of operations needed in Iraq. See Geren, Pete and George W. Casey, A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2008, Submission to the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives, 26 February 2008, p. 6.

unpreparedness for most of the events that followed. “As April 2003 began, no one at CENTCOM [Central Command] or CFLCC [Combined Land Forces Component Command] had any concrete understanding of how and to which headquarters the campaign would be transitioned. Staff officers at CENTCOM had attempted to clarify the issue and were reportedly assured that other elements of the US Government would handle the larger issues involved in planning of and executing PH IV [Phase Four] operations.”<sup>398</sup> Aggravating this situation was the U.S. Army’s unpreparedness for recognizing and combating an insurgency. “Not only did the United States fail to prepare for an insurgency, it took several months to even recognize that an insurgency actually was occurring, and even longer to admit it to the American public. While soldiers on the ground had a more realistic understanding of what was developing, the administration dismissed the escalating violence as the work of regime diehards who soon would be defeated.”<sup>399</sup> The effect of this unpreparedness was staggering: “the United States did not have a coherent COIN strategy in Iraq for more than three years.”<sup>400</sup>

In a sense, the length of time required by the U.S. Army, as an institution, to understand and accept the quandary that it faced in Iraq is a temporal measurement of how separated the organization was from the ideal form. It took the tactical units in contact with the environment and the enemy in Iraq three years to make a sufficient amount of correct adaptations to influence the development of an appropriate strategy to resource and reinforce this effort. Not until late-2005/early-2006 were tactical units suitably resourced for pairing tactical-level activity with the

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<sup>398</sup> Wright and Reese, Op Cit., p. 76.

<sup>399</sup> Mockaitis, Thomas R., Op. Cit, pp. 25-26.

<sup>400</sup> RAND, Conducting Counterinsurgency Operations: Lessons from Iraq (2003-2006), Santa Monica, CA, 2008, p. 1.

accomplishment of national objectives. “In many cases combat units at the brigade level and below did a tremendous job, usually with outstanding support from Civil Affairs units, applying military resources to combat the insurgency and to improve infrastructure, restore services, and develop a capacity for civil society within their local areas of operation. These actions were often a result of initiative and ingenuity by junior officers and noncommissioned officers rather than the application of doctrine or the receipt of useful guidance from higher echelons.”<sup>401</sup> Adaptation in OIF was truly a tactical endeavor.

The reactive sequence in Iraq was compelled as much by the U.S. Army’s unpreparedness for full spectrum operations as it was by the enemy faced in OIF. As Scales argues, “war against such an enemy has devolved primarily into a series of tactical engagements fought principally at squad and platoon levels. As a result, joint warfare and other elements of military power are increasingly being applied at lower and lower levels, to the extent that combat leaders of much lower rank and experience are performing the functions formerly considered the purview of senior commanders.”<sup>402</sup>

Adaptation in OIF also occurred in spite of an institutionalized distaste for COIN operations. In 2006, David Kilcullen recommended a simple way to adapt to this aversion: “what if higher headquarters doesn’t ‘get’ counterinsurgency? Higher headquarters is telling you the mission is to ‘kill terrorists,’ or pushing for high-speed armored patrols and a base-camp mentality. They just do not seem to understand counterinsurgency. This is not uncommon, since company-grade officers today often have more combat experience than senior officers. In this

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<sup>401</sup> Schnaubelt, Christopher M., “After the Fight: Interagency Operations,” *Parameters*, Winter 2005-06, p. 50.

<sup>402</sup> Scales, Robert H., “The Second Learning Revolution,” *Military Review*, January-February 2006, p. 37.

case, just do what you can.”<sup>403</sup> Tactical level leaders ‘doing what they could’ led to the types of adaptations that changed how the institutional Army perceived the nature of the conflict in Iraq and how it resourced the force to better achieve organizational goals and missions as the operation progressed.

This chapter will examine the input and output components that comprise the U.S. Army’s adaptive process and will outline modifications made throughout the course of operations in OIF. Factors inhibiting and enabling organizational adaptation will be highlighted and used to demonstrate how tactical-level organizational adaptation drove institutional change in a cyclical pattern.

## **6.1 ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT**

### **6.1.1 Goals and rewards**

The reward system that an organization uses is tied to the effective prosecution and achievement of organizational goals. For the U.S. Army, the principal institutional goal is to “fight and win our nation’s wars.” To fight and win our nation’s wars, the U.S. Army is organized around combat units led by members of the combat arms branches.<sup>404</sup> As a result of

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<sup>403</sup> Kilcullen, David, Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency, March 2006, <http://www.smallwarsjournal.com>, accessed on 19 August 2008, p. 10.

<sup>404</sup> These branches are represented by Infantry, Armor, and the Field Artillery.

this structuring, the evaluation and promotion system of these organizations favors and rewards individuals in the combat arms.<sup>405</sup>

Maintaining a combat oriented force ensures that, culturally, the predilections of the combat arms branches are reflected by individual membership on promotion boards and in these members' selections for key leadership positions; organizationally, there is a preponderance of positions open to promotion by members of the combat arms branches. Because of the U.S. Army's built-in bias favoring the combat arms branches and a warrior culture that has historically incentivized success in combat related actions, the institution, at the highest levels, struggles with evaluating soldiers and officers that have demonstrated success in the types of operations of importance in Iraq. Secretary of Defense Gates argues that, "one of the enduring issues the military struggles with is whether personnel and promotions systems designed to reward the command of American troops will be able to reflect the importance of advising, training, and equipping foreign troops—something still not considered a career-enhancing path for the best and brightest officers."<sup>406</sup>

One of the methods used to evaluate personnel is the Officer Evaluation Report (OER). The current OER (effective March 2006) is a simplified version of the previous OER (effective November 1979). The OER is a relatively straight forward assessment tool that evaluates officers based on a set of categories that can be easily quantified and are directly related to the structure and purpose of the organization. This evaluation system allows for more uniform assessments but minimizes opportunities for evaluating officers on attributes not directly covered

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<sup>405</sup> Many personnel policies designed during the Cold War are less relevant and effective today. Williams, Cindy and Curtis Gilroy, Op Cit.

<sup>406</sup> Gates, Robert M., Op Cit.

in the format. Since success in combat is still the primary goal and obligation of the U.S. Army, the metrics employed in the OER, despite their ostensible generality, are shaded by a preference for the achievement of success in combat-related tasks and proficiencies. Paradoxically, the current OER format replaced a previous version that is arguably a better assessment tool for the qualities requisite to the U.S. Army's current conflicts.<sup>407</sup>

The structure of the U.S. Army also affects how particular organizational goals are constructed and perceived. Tasks that would normally be considered non-combat tend to be shunned, ignored, or modified in such a way as to make them more or less combat-oriented. The options pursued for the completion of a particular goal or mission tend to be abstractions of combat related tasks (usually involving force) that might not be the most appropriate for the mission at hand. This occurs because the options available to a soldier or leader in a complex, non-linear environment are truncated by a goals and rewards system that favors combat over all

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<sup>407</sup> DA Form 67-9 (OER March 2006) evaluates officers on the following characteristics: Attributes (Mental, Physical, Emotional); Skills (Conceptual, Interpersonal, Technical, Tactical); Influencing (Communicating, Decision-Making, Motivating); Operating (Planning, Executing, Assessing); Improving (Developing, Building, Learning). DA Form 67-8 (OER November 1979) evaluated officers differently: Possesses Capacity to Acquire Knowledge/Grasp Concepts; Demonstrates Appropriate Knowledge and Expertise in Associated Tasks; Maintains Appropriate Level of Physical Fitness; Motivates, Challenges and Develops Subordinates; Performs under Physical and Mental Stress; Encourages Candor and Frankness in Subordinates; Clear and Concise in Written Communications; Displays Sound Judgment; Seeks Self Improvement; is Adaptive to Changing Situations; Sets and Enforces High Standards; Possesses Military Bearing and Appearance; Supports EO/EEO; Clear and Concise in Oral Communications. Of particular importance in the old OER is the emphasis on encouraging communication in subordinates and adaptability; both of these characteristics are critical in complex insurgency environments where rapid learning must take place and subordinates bear a disproportionate responsibility for decision-making.



other tasks. If no set of alternative tasks exists and if the reward system is predicated on proficiency in combat then rapid and corrective adaptations are less likely to occur. Making the appropriate changes would require not only that the decision-maker perceive the environment differently and reject the institutionalized reward system but also that decision-makers advocate the inappropriateness of trained tasks and methods to the current problem set. As one soldier deployed to Mosul, Iraq between 2004 and 2005 argued:

*“You have to be willing to accept when things don’t work. That is a tough adaptation to make. That is not a technical adaptation but a mental adaptation that you have to make. That is difficult for your first couple of months. The majority of our brigade had never deployed. For them, after 15 years of being told that this is how the Army does things, two months later, you have to drop that and say, ‘this doesn’t work; what will?’ That was the biggest thing we had to overcome. We had a lot of very stubborn legacy commanders under our brigade. It was difficult to tell them that you don’t have to bulldoze a house and that it might work if you knock on the door first. They might be more willing to give you information if you just ask as opposed to bulldozing their house down.”<sup>408</sup>*

The net result of the U.S. Army’s goals and rewards system is that it: is still biased in favor of success in combat; compensates the demonstration of combat related skills in the promotion

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<sup>408</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

system; rewards institutional efficiency at the expense of individual accomplishment<sup>409</sup> and; constrains cognition and motivation in the search for alternative methods of mission accomplishment. The effect of this system is not consuming but it has had and will continue to have an effect on individual and organizational capacities for adaptation.

### **6.1.2 Information**

Because the U.S. Army is a bureaucratic, centrally-controlled, hierarchical system, information tends to be pushed from the core to peripheral units rather than pulled on an as-needed basis. Information is pulled from tactical units up through higher commands, is centralized, analyzed, processed, and then pushed back to lower commands. Any formal requests for information are pulled through this centralized system in what can be a time consuming process, particularly in complex environments where many forms of valuable information are difficult to obtain.<sup>410</sup> This centralized system works well when facing a uniformed enemy on a linear battlefield: perceptions and operations are better controlled and coordinated. But on a non-linear battlefield (or some derivative thereof) saturated with manifold threat organizations, a centralized and hierarchical system is simply too cumbersome to deal with the speed of processing required by

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<sup>409</sup> As Scales argues, “Military learning must shift from an institutional to a Soldier-based system that rewards individual performance rather than institutional efficiency.” See Scales, Robert H., “The Second Learning Revolution,” *Op Cit*, p. 38.

<sup>410</sup> The bulk of higher-order intelligence work as well as information analysis occurs in echelons above tactical units. The smaller the unit or the lower the echelon, the less likely that it has a significant capacity for information gathering, comparison, analysis, and distribution.

dispersed and atomized operations.<sup>411</sup> The amount of information available (because of an enhanced communications and data sharing network) in a complex environment and the type of information collected (and required), much of it not ‘combat’ in nature, is staggering.

Much of the burden of managing information in Iraq, particularly non-combat related information, falls to the relatively few trained, and many untrained, practitioners of Information Operations (IO). Doctrinally, IO is conducted in support of combat operations: “commanders conduct (plan, prepare, execute, and assess) information operations (IO) to apply the information element of combat power. Combined with information management and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations, effective IO results in gaining and maintaining information superiority. Information superiority creates conditions that allow commanders to shape the operational environment and enhance the effects of all elements of combat power.”<sup>412</sup> But in Iraq IO, at times, became somewhat of a main effort in combating the insurgency. This significantly altered how the U.S. Army planned and conducted IO.

Wright and Reese describe the situation in Iraq in 2003: “when the Coalition invaded Iraq in March 2003, US Army units at battalion and brigade level did not have dedicated IO assets in their organizations. As CJTF-7 transitioned to full spectrum operations in the summer of 2003, tactical units dearly missed this capability. However, Soldiers quickly adapted and improvised

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<sup>411</sup> Historically, the U.S. Army has maintained fairly tight control over the sharing of information so as to ensure that the information that was shared was accurate and fit into formats easily understood by all units regardless of composition. For instance, simple acronyms are used for reporting battlefield information: SALUTE (Size, Activity, Location, Uniform, Time, Equipment); SALT (Size, Activity, Location, Time) and; LACE (Liquids, Ammunition, Casualties, Equipment) are common formats.

<sup>412</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-13 Information Operations: Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures, November 2003, p. 1.

solutions to this problem. During that summer many units tasked the IO mission to the field artillery (FA) Soldiers on their staffs. After major combat operations ended in April 2003, the primary FA mission to provide indirect fire support to ground maneuver units for the most part disappeared.”<sup>413</sup> IO also became an additional duty for other staff elements not necessarily trained in this competency. “In most tactical units, PSYOP [Psychological Operations] units provided the only dedicated means of conducting the operations planned by the IO and effects cells at the brigade and division level.”<sup>414</sup> In Iraq, IO was being conducted by many untrained personnel and with doctrine that treated the discipline almost distinctly as a combat support effort. The speed at which tactical units reacted to the environment and planned and conducted IO was uncharacteristic for an endeavor that is typically planned and coordinated at the highest levels in the military.

The IO planning process tends to be deliberate and protracted. Transferring critical, sensitive information and coordinating themes and messages across the theater with guidelines imposed by the Pentagon (and other national-level agencies) is a laborious endeavor requiring permissions from various higher command authorities.<sup>415</sup> But in Iraq the pace of operations

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<sup>413</sup> Wright and Reese, Op Cit., p. 282. Also, “Fire support officer and staffs also changed missions. Many were tasked by their commanders to lead the IO planning for their units. IO at the lower tactical level required the integration of existing EW [Electronic Warfare], deception, PSYOP, PA [Public Affairs] and civil-military staff sections into a comprehensive whole.”

<sup>414</sup> Wright and Reese, Op Cit., p. 284.

<sup>415</sup> Chiarelli and Smith argue that “unfortunately, many of our most important capabilities are implemented at bureaucratic speed, not at the speed required by those at user level. We have the technology to share information much faster, but our legacy stovepiped approval processes can slow down the transfer of that information.”

required decentralization in the development of IO products. During OIF, the overall IO campaign was still centrally controlled and managed but the rules regarding local IO efforts were relaxed. Speed in tailoring efforts and messages to particular populations were given primacy. “In the summer of 2003, IO initiatives often emerged among those Soldiers that were closest to the Iraqi population.”<sup>416</sup> Additionally, “speed in the production of IO was the most important lesson learned” and this usually occurred by spreading the message by word of mouth.<sup>417</sup>

Decentralizing the IO effort can come at a cost. Few staff officers and certainly far fewer soldiers have any direct training in planning and conducting IO, particularly in a complex environment where the information environment rapidly changes. But in these environments, the common soldier is an absolutely indispensable tool for shaping the information environment. “Joe is and always has been the best weapon and worst liability of the IO effort. He has the face-to-face access on a daily basis that more senior personnel do not have, and it is his actions, not the IO planner’s, that determine the local attitude toward Coalition Forces.”<sup>418</sup>

One of the biggest hurdles in decentralizing the IO effort is the enormous costs posed by having uncoordinated and conflicting messages being sent to overlapping populations in a diverse environment. For instance, a message that might be appropriate for a Kurdish audience in Kirkuk might be wholly inappropriate for a Sunni audience in Fallujah. The appropriate

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Chiarelli, Peter W. and Stephen M. Smith, “Learning from Our Modern Wars: the Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future,” *Military Review*, September-October 2007, p. 7.

<sup>416</sup> Wright and Reese Op Cit., p. 284.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid, 285.

<sup>418</sup> Paschall, Joseph F., “IO for Joe: Applying Strategic IO at the Tactical Level,” *Field Artillery*, July-August 2005, p. 28. “Joe” is a slang colloquialism for a U.S. Army soldier.

balance must be struck between central coordination (and a slower pace of production) and speed and tailoring of the effort (and any possible conflict resulting therein).

Another problem with collecting and managing information in a complex environment like that found in Iraq is that the training and equipment provided to soldiers and officers has been tailored for combat speed, efficiency, and effectiveness and not necessarily for other operations. This poses four interrelated problems that affect the adaptability of the organization: 1) soldiers and officers might not be aware of what information is relevant; 2) the equipment and processes necessary for collecting and assessing this information might not exist; 3) soldiers and staffs might become overwhelmed with information (much of which might be irrelevant) and; 4) commanders might have the opportunity to become decisively involved in operations echelons below that for which they are directly responsible. The fourth problem is perhaps the most pernicious to decentralized operations: “the military will have to deal with the seismic cultural shift that would result from ubiquitous connectivity and data. During the Afghanistan war, a group of top-level commanders was able to watch a UAV lock in on a target via streaming video. Sitting inside the Pentagon, the brass gave the order to fire the missile that destroyed the target on the other side of the globe. This capability has a dark side, however. ‘It’s easier for the command to micromanage.’”<sup>419</sup>

The ubiquity of information and the need for decentralization in a complex environment poses challenges to commanders and decision makers not unlike those that IO practitioners face. But “allowing organizational members to follow their experience in making decisions rather than following standard operating procedures produces better performance in general and during

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<sup>419</sup> Business Week, “The Network is the Battlefield,” 7 January 2003.

crisis.”<sup>420</sup> This defies the natural tendencies of a hierarchical and centrally controlled organization, particularly one dominated by leaders that are versed in the requirements and exigencies of combat operations, a belief in the unity of command, a reliance on near-certainty (that is supposed to be delivered by an omnipotent intelligence apparatus), and a concomitant fear of risk taking. McMaster asserts that “the belief in near-certainty also undermines military culture, especially in connection with the expectations of junior leaders. If leaders are not conditioned to cope with uncertainty, they are likely to experience paralysis and wait for orders when they confront chaotic circumstances. While much of the transformation literature stresses adaptability and initiative, the force’s inability to overmatch the enemy in a close fight, a bias toward deductive reasoning, and the belief in dominant knowledge discourage risk taking. Leaders will be predisposed to wait for information rather than take resolute action...ironically, a force that was designed to be fast and agile will operate ponderously.”<sup>421</sup>

But something that does not exist in a complex environment is certainty. If certainty did exist, *ipso facto*, the environment would likely not be considered complex. Managing uncertainty becomes a daily if not hourly endeavor when raw information is transmitted to leaders forcing them to make on the spot (many times unaided by staff analysis) decisions regarding unpredictable and unforeseen events. Information might be curt and spurious and as a result, the conduct of operations extemporaneous:

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<sup>420</sup> Lin, Zhiang and Kathleen M. Carley, “Organizational Design and Adaptation in Response to Crises: Theory and Practice,” CASOS, 3 July 2002, p. 29.

<sup>421</sup> McMaster, H.R., Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War, Op Cit, p. 90.

*“I remember when I first heard the term IED. Somebody drove over a garbage bag that blew up. The response was that we were told not to drive over garbage bags anymore. That was how we received information from then on out.”<sup>422</sup>*

An unpredictable environment puts the onus on junior leaders to become senior decision makers. The information available might be as simple as the transmission of a message telling soldiers to avoid driving over debris on the roadway or as complex as multiple overhead pictures of a riot in progress. In either circumstance, the leader is forced to make decisions in an uncertain environment and to make significant (sometimes uninformed) choices regarding how to treat unprocessed data.

But opportunities exist for using the vast communications architecture available to the U.S. Army for exploiting the information environment, reducing uncertainty, and resourcing junior leaders with dynamic information sharing while not increasing the size of (and interference precipitated by) the coordinating staff in theater. For example, various geographically dispersed assets can be massed via secure communications networks:

*“I think that we are getting to the stage where someone else can do the analysis that is not located in the headquarters. They tried that at [Fort] Lewis for awhile. The Stryker unit in theater was sending stuff back to Lewis and they were trying to leverage the headquarters at Lewis as if they were living with them and trying to come up with products when what they were really doing was preparing the next*

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<sup>422</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion then to Falluja (March 2003-July 2003), Personal Interview, 20 June 2008.



*Stryker unit to deploy by being fully engaged in what they were doing. So, we could start exploiting those networks without overloading them with information. That is the art of it.”*<sup>423</sup>

A similar method was also employed in 2008 in a Sadr City operation where the brigade in contact was resourced by national-level assets:

*“When in the last couple of months we had this Sadr City fight, in fact, that is what we did to the brigade that was there in Sadr City. They were having direct linkages from national assets that were going straight down to the brigade. We didn’t push all these analysts and big staff down to the brigade but we did push the products of those analysts down...so that they could use them...the brigade sort of had tasking ability back to the national assets to focus on this and focus on that. That may be the way to get the best of both worlds.”*<sup>424</sup>

Enhanced and varied communications systems also allow for the pulling of information on an as-needed basis. In a time constrained and rapidly developing environment, the ability to retrieve information from sources across the theater is invaluable:

*“We developed informal information sharing through MIRC-Chat [Multi-User Internet Relay Chat]. It is SIPRnet [Secret Internet Protocol Router Network]*

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<sup>423</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Wong, Leonard, Personal Interview, 6 November 2008.

<sup>424</sup> Major General Perkins, David, Telephone Interview, 21 September 2008.

*based but it is a chat room. People's call signs were similar to their unit call signs. I would find people from old units that I was in that were serving in Iraq and it turns into an exchange of information about what the enemy has been doing in different areas. Some of this was formalized in the INTSUM [Intelligence Summary]. But the INTSUM was a push. This was a pull; people talking and exchanging information.”<sup>425</sup>*

Additionally, maintaining a robust dual-use communications capability allows for establishing secure and anonymous information gathering systems critical to environments where confidentiality is a priority:

*“It was normal for our sources to email us tips or respond to questions and do it on the cell phone. Technology has certainly helped the counterinsurgent.”<sup>426</sup>*

The risk to the U.S. Army (as a large organization) throughout OIF has been that generally, when an organization encounters an environment for which it is unprepared, it is likely to apply modified standard operating procedures (SOP) to problems regardless of their applicability. A lack of information (or information superiority) and a preponderance of conflicting environmental stimuli might lead to a counterproductive situation where the U.S.

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<sup>425</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (November 2004-2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>426</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Crider, James, E-mail Interview, 22 September 2008.

Army is forced to supplement operations with firepower.<sup>427</sup> But in complex environments the U.S. Army will not necessarily have to fight for information in the traditional sense and might be able to use its vast resources to distribute information through both a push and pull system facilitated by advanced communications and an active information gathering and processing network, if the organization is willing to relax traditional controls.<sup>428</sup> Of course, the responsibility for processing and acting on this information will be driven to lower and lower echelons because of the nature of operations and availability of information in complex environments. As Gersten argues, “the Information Age will be vastly different, and therefore the demands on the leader will also change. Rather than having to fight for data and information as in the Industrial Age, in the Information Age, the data available will be overwhelming. The key will be to turn raw data and information into knowledge that can be acted upon to achieve stated goals and objectives, while denying this same access to adversaries. Data will flow anywhere and everywhere. The speed of the processor will have only marginal meaning as the hardware speeds will overmatch the human dimension.”<sup>429</sup>

Suffocating volumes of sometimes inappropriate (i.e., combat-oriented) data can render the human processor (trained for combat) less effective in an alternative environment. Experience, particularly when training is single-mission focused, is required for determining

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<sup>427</sup> Libicki, Martin C. et al, *Byting Back: Regaining Information Superiority against 21<sup>st</sup> Century Insurgents*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2007, p. 4.

<sup>428</sup> Given the prevalence of communicative means, soldiers have found ways to bypass normal organizational channels for sharing information. Examples include the use of white board chatting, websites dedicated to spreading knowledge (like [companycommander.com](http://companycommander.com)), and other inter-netted tools.

<sup>429</sup> Gerstein, Daniel M., *Leading at the Speed of Light: New Strategies for U.S. Security in the Information Age*, Potomac Books, Washington DC, 2006, p. 47.

which data is relevant and which data can be ignored. Experience in the complex environment of OIF, adaptations based upon this experience, and the relative empowerment of subordinate leaders enabled the human dimension of the information environment from becoming completely overmatched by technological capabilities and ubiquitous data flows.

### **6.1.3 Training**

The training that soldiers and U.S. Army units received prior to the commencement and in the early stages of OIF was insufficient for successfully completing the operation's strategic objectives.<sup>430</sup> Because OIF morphed into an unpredicted (and unprecedented) simultaneous full spectrum operation, no existing template sufficiently outlined how to resource and prepare for this type of fight. To make matters worse, even if units were allotted time to conduct training for full spectrum operations, they were limited in their approaches to training by doctrine, regulations, and an institutional preference (particularly within the senior ranks of the U.S. Army) for conventional warfare and the industrial practices adapted to and supporting of this type of warfare. As Vandergriff argues, the mobilization paradigm developed during the Cold War had a lasting and comprehensive effect on how units and leaders were trained for operations: "to support the mobilization doctrine, the Army developed leadership training methods that paralleled management training practices in the corporate structures of the

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<sup>430</sup> For instance, "The immediate responsibility for administering post-war Iraq will fall upon the Commander of the U.S. Central Command, as the commander of the U.S. and coalition forces in the field. The purpose of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance is to develop the detailed plans that he and his subordinates will draw on in meeting these responsibilities." Feith, Douglas J., "The Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA)," Statement to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 11 February 2003.

Industrial Age. The challenge for the Army was to get millions of citizens with little or no military experience and turn them into soldiers and officers in a short time. Industry provided the answers, and in the aftermath of the glow of victory in several wars, these approaches became institutionalized. Some modifications were applied to leader development, but they happened along the fringes of existing laws, regulations, policies and beliefs.”<sup>431</sup>

The gaps between the doctrine and training and the exigencies of simultaneous full spectrum operations began to narrow only after years of trial and error in the field with spasmodic episodes of legacy and adaptive thinking intermixed therein. The range of adaptive responses was expansive and largely depended on how wedded a commander was to trying to adapt the situation to training vice adapting training to the situation. Austin Long characterizes different commanders’ responses: “the U.S. military’s actual conduct of COIN in Iraq from 2003 to 2005 can charitably be described as highly variable. The military used an array of approaches ranging from firepower-intensive raids to population security. This variation seems to have depended partly on understandable differences, such as the region and time period, but mostly appears to be due to different commanders. Some commanders heavily emphasized the security and development approach called for by doctrine. Others ‘increased kinetic activity,’ a euphemism for employing firepower and raids.”<sup>432</sup> Chiarelli and Smith contend that subordinate leaders were obstructed by more senior commanders in their pursuit of training scenarios that would better prepare soldiers for the realities of operations in Iraq: “in some units, commanders

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<sup>431</sup> Vandergriff, Donald E., *Raising the Bar: Creating and Nurturing Adaptability to Deal with the Changing Face of War*, Center for Defense Information, Washington, DC, 2006, p. 11.

<sup>432</sup> Long, Austin, *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006*, Op Cit, p. 22.

refused to face the realities of the post-cold-war period and continued training regimes adopted during the height of the Soviet threat. Training in these units was kinetic, and those who tried to insert non-kinetic events into the training plan were thwarted by commanders who feared ‘mission creep’ into roles they didn’t think belonged to the military.”<sup>433</sup> The variety of reactions to the shift from combat to simultaneous full spectrum operations in Iraq is indicative of the U.S. Army’s unpreparedness for manifold OOTW:

*“Our change of mission was not preplanned. We had no preparatory training for the security mission. We had to invent all of that stuff as we moved along. We learned it from day to day.”*<sup>434</sup>

*“It was pretty quiet in Falluja when we were there. The civilians were quiet and pretty good. They would trade with us. We respected them and they respected us. The unit that replaced us did not understand this. They were interested in kicking in doors. Next thing you know, their vehicles started blowing up.”*<sup>435</sup>

*“When we were preparing to go, the thinking was that it was going to be another Desert Storm, another 100 hour war, that we were going to go over and we were*

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<sup>433</sup> Chiarelli, Peter W. and Stephen M. Smith, “Learning from Our Modern Wars: The Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future,” Op Cit, p. 12.

<sup>434</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion and to Falluja (March 2003-July 2003), Personal Interview, 20 June 2008.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid.

*going to be coming home on boats in 4 months. We did not have any concept that we were going to be there for a year. We thought that, ok, 4 months and it is over... We are going to go in there, blow shit up, and then go home.”*<sup>436</sup>

Various interwoven factors affected whether or not a unit adapted to simultaneous full spectrum operations through training initiatives. Institutionally, the U.S. Army’s system of home station unit training and MREs conducted at various training centers continued with standard (i.e. mostly conventional) individual and unit training well into OIF. This compounded the training challenge that the U.S. Army faced by focusing units on tasks for which they already were well prepared but were irrelevant for conditions in Iraq.<sup>437</sup> Standardized conventional training was as inadequate for operations in Iraq in mid-2003 (when the insurgent threat began to rise) as it was in early 2004 (as the insurgency evolved)<sup>438</sup> and in 2005 (when the insurgency was in full effect)<sup>439</sup>.

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<sup>436</sup> Soldier deployed to Baghdad (early 2003, 2006-2007), Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

<sup>437</sup> Krepinevich, Andrew, *The War in Iraq: The Nature of Insurgency Warfare*, Op Cit.

<sup>438</sup> “The OPFOR [Opposing Force] at national training centers did not prepare the unit for the threat array in theater.” Center for Army Lessons Learned, *Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq*, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, p. 75.

<sup>439</sup> “The brigade CTC [Combat Training Center] rotation featured a one dimensional OPFOR. The Signal Intelligence (SIGINT) environment was based on a legacy threat with primarily FM communications and tactical control traffic. During training Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) operations focused on clearing buildings and conducting cordon and search operations, but did not replicate the long periods where a lull in activity and no actionable intelligence existed, despite the conduct of numerous presence patrols or cordon and knock

The array of non-standard operations necessitated by OIF forced units to work with a range of actors that they would typically rarely if ever train with, especially not to the level required by a true full spectrum capability. Even brigades (such as the Stryker brigade) with the organic staff assets necessary for integrating these specialized units and agencies had difficulty incorporating exogenous supporting elements into their training activities. “Units are not given the sufficient opportunity to adequately train with non-organic assets such as Civil Affairs (CA) or Psychological Operation (PSYOP) teams.”<sup>440</sup> These disparate units not only had to adapt to full spectrum operations in Iraq against an unconventional foe but also had to adapt to working with each other.

Problems with matching training and execution extended well beyond the capacities of the U.S. Army. Many of the inter-agency and coalitional associations and working relationships that were developed in Iraq were rarely if ever trained on by units prior to deployment. One recommendation suggested that training should better reflect the necessities of an integrated mission set: “home stations and pre-deployment training installations should support rather than control pre-deployment training and warfighting strategies. Training scenarios should include working closely with Other Coalition Forces-Iraq (OCF-I) and operational detachment-alpha (ODA) elements as well as other joint units or governmental organizations within the brigade’s

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operations.” Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. xiii.

<sup>440</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit.



battle space, sharing intelligence and situational awareness.”<sup>441</sup> The range of training requirements and lessons emerging from operations in Iraq overwhelmed an already inadequately designed and resourced training program.

A dearth of appropriate doctrine and an inability to keep pace with changes in Iraq hamstrung home station training efforts and those of the training centers resulting in a noticeable deficit in preparation for units deploying in the later phases of OIF:

*“We probably weren’t as prepared as we should have been because the training wasn’t developed for that area. The training that was developed for that type of conflict wasn’t implemented into any of the rotations yet so we weren’t really trained for that. We didn’t really have any doctrine.”*<sup>442</sup>

Even tactics that were well addressed in doctrine and training were difficult to adapt to the complex environment encountered in Iraq:

*“As far as infantry tactics went, how we used maneuver, that all changed once we got into a real city with a real conflict.”*<sup>443</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit.

<sup>442</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid.

The pace of adaptation in training for the institutional U.S. Army was slow (as is typical of a large organization making inclusive changes) but when change was made, it was fairly encompassing.<sup>444</sup> Since existing doctrine was largely inapplicable for adapting training to a simultaneous full spectrum environment, changes were based on individual soldier and unit experiences in Iraq. This occurred because the U.S. Army had no readily available guide for rapidly shifting training initiatives and programs across the force. Although many of the significant changes made were piecemeal and discontinuous, over time, they affected a significant number of units and individual soldiers. For instance, to address deficiencies in COIN training and doctrine, Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) mandated training at a “COIN Academy” in country at Camp Taji, Iraq.<sup>445</sup> Additionally, MNF-I also created the Counterinsurgency Handbook that elevated the importance the culture and history of Iraq and downgraded the value of purely kinetic operations.<sup>446</sup> Incorporating lessons into training occurred at home station as well:

*“Prior to my second deployment, the unit incorporated lessons learned from units previously stationed in Iraq. There were multiple mission readiness exercises and deliberate planning for operations. At the individual level, simple*

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<sup>444</sup> This was accomplished by collecting lessons from deployed and returning units, analyzing these lessons, and then disseminating these lessons throughout the force via the Professional Military Education (PME) system, unit publications, proponent publications, CALL publications, and websites.

<sup>445</sup> Long, Austin, Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006, Op Cit, p. 22-23.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

*weapons qualification was no longer the standard. We transitioned to close-quarters marksmanship training and multiple IED identification classes.”*<sup>447</sup>

The post-deployment report generated by 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry (SBCT) indicated that (based on experience) the standard training model should be altered to include untraditional and non-standard training events for soldiers and leaders: “training outside their comfort zone can allow and encourage the development of instinctive leadership. This out-of-the-box thinking can provide leaders with the skill sets necessary to utilize all available assets in non-traditional ways resulting in innovative and adaptive leaders that think faster, make decisions rapidly, and act quickly. In addition junior leaders can be enabled to function at higher levels of responsibility than previously expected, maintaining the initiative with a proactive forward presence.”<sup>448</sup>

The archetypal doctrinal approach to training was (and still is) an obstacle to the adaptive capacity of the U.S. Army in general and deploying units in particular. Tillson contends that “the existing concepts of training for task, condition, and standard that have become the focal point of most DOD training activities might be becoming less relevant to the department’s needs. The uncertainties are too numerous, and it is difficult to predict the capabilities and associated tasks, much less the conditions and standards, that DOD will need to deal with these asymmetric

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<sup>447</sup> Soldier deployed to Baghdad (March 2003-August 2003, November 2004-November 2005), Personal Interview, 1 July 2008.

<sup>448</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. xvii.

threats.”<sup>449</sup> He continues by arguing that “gaining the same experience repeatedly, e.g., training the same task to the same standard, may not aid performance in a novel situation, and it may even hurt performance if the individual insists on approaching the situation from a particular mindset that might not be appropriate.”<sup>450</sup> Traditional training patterns emphasize the rote memorization of tasks more so than adapting tasks to a particular intent or situation. The argument that training for a specific task to standard is necessary for predictability and standardization throughout units necessitates that the basic set of individual and collective tasks either be expanded or altered to incorporate full spectrum capabilities.

Training a limited set of particular tasks to standard not only decreases the likelihood of adaptation (since excessive training in the same task can dull adaptive tendencies) it also ensures that an adversary (through contact) will become accustomed to the range of options available to units and individuals in any particular operation or mission. Predictability in repeated engagements favors the organization that is better situated for making rapid adaptations and disadvantages the highly-trained but less flexible unit. The efficiency and time savings gained by utilizing the task, conditions, and standards training model “militates against combined arms effectiveness” in operations requiring simultaneous full spectrum capabilities and the ability to rapidly adapt.<sup>451</sup> As Lopez argues, “if an organization is going to learn in a complex environment, it must give great thoughts as to what it measures, but it must capture and measure performance by some form of metric. The metric must be open ended and qualitative, or seek to

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<sup>449</sup> Tillson, John C. F., *Learning to Adapt to Asymmetric Threats*, IDA Document Number D-3114, Op Cit, p. 20.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

measure trends from an assortment of indicators, avoiding the bureaucratic slavery of ‘tasks, conditions and standards,’ that inadvertently sets limits for organizations.”<sup>452</sup>

#### **6.1.4 Constraints**

Conducting operations in a populated urban environment poses significant operational constraints upon a state-based force. This task is made much more difficult when a state-based force is facing an insurgency that is neither uniformed nor wholly indigenous. Restrictions imposed by treaties, conventions, and the laws of war, written and signed almost principally for containing the use of excessive force by state-based militaries fighting other state-based militaries, convolute this task even further and bind state-based forces to a codified set of laws that in no way pertain to the opposition and barely reflect the realities of the modern battlefield. Additionally, forces that are designed for high-intensity conflict (like the U.S. Army) are further constrained by their own training and doctrine, most of which is designed for conventional operations on open terrain.

The absence of training for operations in a populated environment against an almost anonymous foe can either paralyze operations or lead to overly-martial responses that might only further exacerbate and confuse an already confounding situation. As John Vines argues, “certainly a kinetic solution or a military solution is not the ultimate solution to the insurgency in Iraq.”<sup>453</sup> This is particularly true for a force with little or no experience in simultaneous full

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<sup>452</sup> Lopez, Rafael, *On Learning: Metrics Based Systems for Countering Asymmetric Threats*, Op Cit, p. 57.

<sup>453</sup> Vines, John, U.S. General on Winning in Iraq, *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer Transcript*, 14 July 2005.

spectrum operations that is trained for conducting fast-paced maneuvers with a prejudice for violence:

*“As an infantryman, I hate to say it, but I think that if we went in not so aggressive, you wouldn’t have had made so many Iraqis mad. If you upset a family, for instance, and you go in and search their place and you insult them in the process, then there isn’t going to be much loyalty to the Americans or the coalition. Then, they may go and work with the foreign fighters or the insurgency. So, you go in hard to establish that we are here and the dominant force but it slows things down sometimes. If we went in a bit more neutral, if you could, I think that you would have got the people in that area to bite off on what you were thinking.”<sup>454</sup>*

Further constraining operations was the existence of a fairly restrictive set of Rules of Engagement (ROE). ROE define (among other things) when the use of deadly force is permitted, the types of munitions that can be used in a given situation, proportionality in the use of force, and treatment procedures for detainees. Standard ROE are many times difficult to understand and in Iraq, were insufficient for guiding operations in a simultaneous full spectrum environment. In particular, the ROE significantly restrained the use of indirect fire and disrupted the entire doctrinal targeting process: “units going in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) find themselves in stability operations and support operations environment in which restrictions

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<sup>454</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

within the ROE and the Contemporary Operational Environment (COE) limit the effectiveness of doctrinal targeting. The ROE restricts the use of indirect fires in an urban environment because of secondary effects.”<sup>455</sup> As 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry (SBCT) indicated in its post-deployment report, “Force on force targeting methodology works for maneuver warfare but not necessarily for man hunting.”<sup>456</sup>

Initially, overly protective force protection measures (in place to avoid casualties or situations that might precipitate casualties), an institutional preference for conducting operations at stand-off distances or out of contact, and most commanders’ wariness of divesting organizational control all constrained the effectiveness of the U.S. Army in conducting SSR operations. Thomas Mockaitis argues that “while American forces can be quite flexible in conventional operations, the uncertainties of unconventional conflict combined with political aversion to casualties encourages an American cultural tendency for those in the upper ranks to provide precise instructions to their subordinates. Since insurgent guerrillas and terrorists operate in small units as part of a flat organization, those who oppose them must operate in correspondingly small units to be effective. These units, usually led by a lieutenant or senior noncommissioned officer (NCO), must be free to take the initiative based on sound judgment and according to a broad strategy without constantly asking for instructions up the chain of command.”<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>455</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, p. 86.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

<sup>457</sup> Mockaitis, Thomas R., The Iraq War: Learning from the Past, Adapting to the Present, and Planning for the Future, Op Cit, p. 40.

As OIF progressed and the U.S. Army accepted and transitioned into SSR operations, authority for decision making did devolve to more junior leaders, force protection measures were relaxed, and the ROE better reflected the necessities of operating in a complex environment against an insurgency.

#### **6.1.5 Organizational Context Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- The goals and rewards system is slow to change and still does not formally recognize the realities of current conflicts. Skills requisite to simultaneous full spectrum operations are not appropriately incentivized in training or rewarded in evaluations. Failing to reward the skills requisite to modern military operations reduces the likelihood of their demonstration and internalization. Adaptation is hampered by rewarding a desired set of characteristics and achievements established prior to OEF and OIF.
- Robust and diverse communications networks allow for the rapid spread of information and the decentralized flow of ideas and experiences. IO is enhanced by relaxed controls on the production and dissemination of locally engineered products in consonance with broad guidelines on product and message development. Junior leaders are empowered by greater information flow and a system that maintains the possibility of an informal information-pull system. The greatest risk of unchecked communications flows is the spread of information that might be beyond the scope of comprehension of junior leaders. Furthermore, the amount of information being shared can overwhelm the system causing crashes or end-user inundation.
- Adjustments have been made to the U.S. Army's training focus to better reflect the necessities of operations in Iraq (and Afghanistan). But (and probably not intentionally)



the U.S. Army's training format still assumes a static and doctrinal environment and enemy. The focus of training remains on tasks and not on mission or intent. Thus, adaptation, if practiced, is not practiced as well as it could be. Enhancing training with complex and realistic conditions does not promote adaptation as well as forcing soldiers and leaders to choose and modify tasks and tactics according to the mission or intent.

- Relaxing constraints allowed for the decentralization of decision making and expanded the adaptive freedom of junior leaders as they were exposed to the environment and empowered/compelled to make decisions.

## **6.2 GROUP DESIGN & CULTURE**

### **6.2.1 Composition**

The composition of U.S. Army units fully reflects the organization's wartime tasks. Units are filled per rank and occupational specialty according to a particular unit's organizational mission. Additionally, units are trained, equipped, and utilized according to this composition. Without monumental changes to the structure and mission of the U.S. Army and its sub-units, organizational composition cannot be easily altered.

Each unit within the U.S. Army is filled with the requisite numbers and types of soldiers necessitated by the mission that the organization is tasked to accomplish or support. But each of these soldiers must also follow a tightly regimented career path that benefits the U.S. Army as a whole. As a result of the meshing of this unit manning system and the career progression path of officers, NCOs, and soldiers, few units maintain any particular grouping of personnel for a long

period of time: personnel move in and out of units on a (usually) upward linear progression throughout their career. The goal of this system is to spread individual experience and knowledge across the U.S. Army while concurrently expanding the tacit knowledge and education of each individual in uniform. This manning procedure works well for units in peacetime but poses drawbacks for units that are operationally deploying or will deploy multiple times within a few years' time span. Much of the tacit, experiential, and associational knowledge built by individuals working within a system, sharing common experiences, and forming attitudes under common leadership is lost when a unit shifts personnel out during a manning change. Although the U.S. Army does place significant restrictions on personnel movement during a deployment, typically, when a unit returns to home station, individuals are moved according to that soldier's career needs, educational requirements, and promotion timetable. The net result of this manning system can completely alter the structure and character of a unit:

*"Large portions of our unit went elsewhere when we returned to home station.*

*My platoon was completely different in 30 days; I couldn't even recognize it."*<sup>458</sup>

The static nature of unit composition for wartime tasks also limits the amount of change that can be effected by shifting personnel within the unit. For instance, if a unit has 100 personnel slotted and all of these personnel are infantry, armor, or field artillery soldiers, then it would be very difficult indeed to expect the unit to be capable of conducting a civil affairs

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<sup>458</sup> Soldier deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad and Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

mission: the training and personnel types required for this mission are just not available. One way of managing this inevitability is by engaging in a process called “task organization.” Task organization is defined as “a temporary grouping of forces designed to accomplish a particular mission. It is the process of allocating available assets to subordinate commanders and (establishing) determining their command and support relationships.”<sup>459</sup> Through task organization, units can coalesce manifold combinations of sub-units and personnel in order to best resource a particular mission. Although the ability to task organize is useful and represents a built-in organizational capacity for adaptation, there are only so many types of specialties any given organization can draw upon, particularly if these specialties are either combat, CS, or CSS in nature. Therefore, the range of mission adaptation is limited. One soldier describes the difficulties associated with task organizing for mission accomplishment in Iraq:

*“It got to the point where we were seriously task organized. We were a mechanized brigade that was task organized down to the company level. Each company had a mechanized infantry platoon, an armor platoon, and a motorized platoon. Each company and battalion was set that way. One battalion of armor looked like any infantry battalion. They did this so that every unit looked like each other. The problem with this is that a tank platoon is not the same as an infantry platoon personnel-wise. A tank platoon has 16 people and an infantry platoon has 40 people. My company was 2 infantry platoons and a tank platoon. Another problem was that the infantry people assigned to a tank company were*

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<sup>459</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics, Washington DC, 30 December 1996.

*overworked...task organization is great but you should never mix the MOSs that are attached because their expertise is for a specific job. I cannot teach a tank platoon to clear a room or a building. Taking 3 guys out of a tank makes no sense for clearing a room that requires a 4 man stack. Some of those tank platoons were short on people. It was a nice concept but it just didn't work in a complicated non-battlefield environment.”*<sup>460</sup>

The limits of institutional organizational composition exposed the operational shortfalls of many units that were not designed to function in other-than-war environments. One response to these deficits was the use of non-maneuver elements in non-standard ‘economy of force’<sup>461</sup> missions.<sup>462</sup> The need to use units for non-standard missions occurs when the parent unit lacks the appropriate personnel (in number and type) and equipment to conduct operations for which it is responsible. But assigning a unit a non-standard mission does not alleviate the problem; it

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<sup>460</sup> Soldier deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad and Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>461</sup> Economy of Force refers to the allocation and use of all forces available and in the most effective way possible.

<sup>462</sup> In Iraq, non-standard economy of force missions were usually assigned to Field Artillery units (and sometimes to RSTA (Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition) or ACR (Armored Cavalry Regiments) units). One of the main reasons this occurred was because Field Artillery units, as combat units, understand maneuver concepts but have few combat missions in an other than war environment. See, Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, p. 94. See also, Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. x.

only resolves questions of responsibility for particular tasks. The unit assigned a non-standard mission inherently suffers from the same shortfalls that required its assignment/reassignment in the first place: it does not have the appropriate personnel and equipment to conduct the mission. Units composed for HIC consist of soldiers that are primarily (and as was the case in OIF early on, solely) trained in and resourced for HIC.<sup>463</sup> Equipment shortfalls can vary depending on the mission (night vision devices, carbines, vehicles, surveillance aids) and can be very difficult to fill because of the challenges associated with acquiring what would be non-standard, or unassigned equipment.

The compositional challenges posed by simultaneous full spectrum operations that were difficult for highly trained regular U.S. Army units to overcome were even more difficult for Reserve and National Guard units to adapt to. Reserve and National Guard units generally receive lower resourcing priority and less frequently than their regular counterparts. Additionally, Reserve and National Guard units are many times depleted by the requirements of regular forces, particularly in regard to personnel. Melvin Laird describes how using units structured and composed for combat in simultaneous full spectrum operations affected Reserve and National Guard units deployed to OIF: “Reserve and National Guard units are understaffed and have been abused by deployments that have taken individuals out of their units to serve as de facto army regulars, many in specialties for which they have not been trained, a practice that eats at the morale of reservists. Nearly 80 percent of the airlift capacity for this war and about 48 percent of the troops have come from Reserve and National Guard units. The high percentages are due, in part, to the specialized missions of those troops: transporting cargo, policing,

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<sup>463</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, p. 35.

rebuilding infrastructure, translating, conducting government affairs—in short, the stuff of building a new nation. We have realized too late that our regular army forces have not been as well trained as they should have been for the new reality of an urban insurgent enemy. Nor was the military hierarchy paying serious attention to the hints that their mission in the twenty-first century would be nation building.”<sup>464</sup>

The combat-oriented composition of the regular forces participating in OIF (compounded by the training inherent to this composition) had a cascading effect not only through active duty forces but also through Reserve and National Guard units. The inability of unit composition to account for non-standard missions (i.e. simultaneous full spectrum missions) is also a measure of how separated U.S. Army units were from the ideal organizational form during OIF.

### **6.2.2 Norms**

Norms are guides to behavior and are derived from common organizational customs, traditions, and practices. Although norm change can occur through the internalization of new experiences, learning, and leadership methods, generally, norms are semi-permanent and reflect the collective thoughts and tendencies of an organization. Even when norms are altered or adapted to new organizational realities, vestiges of previously accepted norms remain intact; their effect on decision making and behavior is enduring.

For the U.S. Army, norms reflect the war-fighting tradition of the institution in general and of its sub-units in particular. Since the U.S. Army is highly practiced in training for and conducting centralized, top-down directed, and sometimes unit-specific combat operations, the

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<sup>464</sup> Laird, Melvin R., “Iraq: Learning the Lessons of Vietnam,” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2005.

institution's norms overwhelmingly reflect this experience. These operational traditions and standards have their purpose in an organized military but have constraining effects that can hem the adaptive initiative inherent to all organizations and individuals. Despite an obvious need for adaptation and a deviation from traditional norms in Iraq, commanders and staffs were reluctant to depart from precise instructions received from higher command elements; rarely if ever was authority questioned.<sup>465</sup> Despite commanders calling for adaptability and initiative in subordinate leaders, the centralized decision-making common to a war-fighting institution developed 'undue inertia' and curtailed violations of the organizational norms of deference and adherence to authority.<sup>466</sup>

War-fighting norms also had a significant effect on planning and training early on in OIF: "attitudes, tendencies, and unaddressed issues that shaped planning at the theater-strategic and operational levels had a direct impact on the tactical-level preparation for OIF. As in Operation JUST CAUSE, the focus on conventional operations shaped how tactical headquarters designed their training and conducted overall preparation for war. Despite the fact that the CFLCC plans directed units to conduct a rolling transition to stability and support operations—which implied that at some point in the campaign tactical units conducting combat operations would transition to stability and support operations—few if any of the Soldiers in these units seemed to understand what this meant or were aware of the general CFLCC concept for PH IV operations."<sup>467</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> Aylwin-Foster, Nigel, "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review*, November-December 2005, p. 6.

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>467</sup> Wright and Reese, *Op Cit.*, p. 77.

The relationship between norms, training, and behavior is symbiotic and mutually reinforcing. For instance, despite foreknowledge of the inevitability of SSR operations in Iraq, “the Army units chosen to take part in OIF appear to have conducted little or no training for these operations.”<sup>468</sup> Training for OOTW would have been a significant deviation not only from common practices and interpretations of doctrine but also from institutional and unit norms. The patterns of behavior and perception shaped by war-fighting norms were so ingrained and inculcated by units and officers that they were hardly recognized and even less often corrected even when circumstances dictated.<sup>469</sup> Many rudimentary initial efforts to adjust norms and behavior to the full spectrum environment of Iraq through education and training were not well received:

*“When all of this started there were a lot of complaints about taking infantry units and putting them from a HIC to a peacekeeping mission at that point. But, everybody adapts...before you didn’t care about communications and the language—you let your weapons do all the talking.”*<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>469</sup> See discussion in Long, Austin, *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006*, Op Cit, p. 27.

<sup>470</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.



*“The Army actually gave us discs with Arabic, depending on where you were going, Kurdish, and the response was typical, ‘I have an M4 and that is all I need to know.’”*<sup>471</sup>

The tendency to revert to and draw upon organizational norms was natural and was indicative of the mindset of the U.S. Army’s leaders: “when confronted with insurgent attacks, the five US divisions reacted differently, but with a tendency toward conventional-style operations and heavy-handed tactics. Units conducted raids based on scant intelligence and applied firepower loosely.”<sup>472</sup> The commander of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division was quoted as saying the following: “this is war...we’re going to use a sledgehammer to crush a walnut.”<sup>473</sup> Despite periods of relative freedom to conduct operations in a manner of their choosing many commanders, because of their unfamiliarity with OOTW, “often reverted to their conventional training and conducted operations that were too methodical or heavy-handed.”<sup>474</sup> Separating leaders and units from ingrained norms was an insurmountable challenge for the first few years of OIF.<sup>475</sup>

The organizational norms of the U.S. Army, no matter how difficult they are to define comprehensively, have an identifiable effect on how units and individuals respond to

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<sup>471</sup> Ibid.

<sup>472</sup> Vandergriff, Donald E., *Raising the Bar: Creating and Nurturing Adaptability to Deal with the Changing Face of War*, Op Cit, p. 243.

<sup>473</sup> Ibid.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid, p. 254.

<sup>475</sup> Because of norms and other factors, not all innovations spawned positive outcomes during OIF.

environmental stimuli and how they react to inputs that might alter their perception. For instance, the belief in the superiority of one organization's norms and over another's (in leadership, history, experience, and accomplishments, for example) can have a chilling effect on cross-organizational learning:

*“Certain units didn’t want to learn from other units. They didn’t want to learn from other units because they didn’t want to work with anyone and certainly didn’t want to hear what we had to say...we were interested in any lessons that could be learned from any unit that was on the ground. They might not be doing things the way that you do it but they have been on the ground. The information that they have is important.”<sup>476</sup>*

Individuals predisposed to pride in one's unit, training, and leadership, all necessary qualities in a war-fighting organization, might nonetheless have difficulty accepting lessons borne from other units' experience despite the relevance of this experience and despite the novelty of the environment where the unit is expected to conduct operations.

Although the norms relevant to war-fighting that prevail in the U.S. Army are deeply embedded and contribute to unit cohesion, pride, and discipline, they are resistant to change and have had a significant effect on the adaptive tendencies of individual units and the institution as a whole.

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<sup>476</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

### 6.2.3 Tasks

Each band of the spectrum of combat represents differing sets of missions, tasks, and training priorities. In a simultaneous full spectrum operation, each band is utilized to some degree depending on the character of a particular mission. For the most part, missions in OIF required an ability to accomplish many tasks that were complimentary, overlapped, or significantly differed. The range of competencies required for mission success in OIF was enormous and ranged from HIC to relief operations.

What muddled the task set required for OIF even further was the enmeshment of conventional and unconventional task sets. Not only did units need to be capable of performing non-standard mission tasks (other than combat) they also needed to be able to conduct or support unconventional missions without significant training and/or proficiency in doing so. This can be challenging in a static training environment but is incalculably more complex in a dynamic threat-infused operational environment in a foreign land.

An organization with little experience in conducting tasks in an unpredictable and complex environment can either experiment with existing task sets or wait until the environment and enemy exude enough indicators to allow for the shaping of an appropriate response. Without a base set of tasks to perform in a full spectrum environment and absent a coherent environmental picture an organization will remain in a reactive mode dependent on external cues for direction. The ability to plan missions and remain proactive while shaping the environment is just not possible if the appropriate task set is un- or underdeveloped for simultaneous full spectrum operations. As Mandeles argues, “the elaboration of tasks and actions is complicated by the degree to which performance of those tasks is contingent upon environmental stimuli—

such as information or actions that originate outside the organization.”<sup>477</sup> The ability to adapt is thus truncated by a task set that remains overly wedded to performance in combat.

#### **6.2.4 Group Design & Culture Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- U.S. Army units have a built in task organization capability that promotes adaptation. But this capability is largely combat-oriented. The combat-oriented composition and structure of units restricts the capacity for more flexible and tailored organizational designs for unconventional adversaries and environments.<sup>478</sup>
- War-fighting norms are particularly resistant to change by the nature of the organization and its principal historical duty. At a time when the mission of fighting and winning wars matched strategy, organizational norms were not quite so restrictive. But as strategy and the primary mission of the U.S. Army have diverged (if not almost fully bifurcating) in the current international security environment, war-fighting norms have reduced the ability to cognitively adapt to increasing complexity and simultaneous full spectrum operations.
- The preponderance of tasks (and thus training) is combat related. This ensures that any adaptations made will draw upon a restricted set of competencies and will be less applicable in a simultaneous full spectrum environment.

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<sup>477</sup> Mandeles, Mark D., *Military Transformation Past and Present: Historical Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Praeger Security International, Westport, CT, 2007, p. 92.

<sup>478</sup> The structure (Modified Table of Organization & Equipment or MTOE) of the U.S. Army has not significantly changed and will only modestly change in future variants of the Brigade Combat Team (BCT).

## **6.3 MATERIAL & TECHNICAL RESOURCES**

### **6.3.1 Equipment**

Equipment is one of the most static inputs to the adaptive cycle. Equipment is tied to strategy and doctrine, is used to support operations, and ultimately assists soldiers (in the environments and with the missions for which it is designed) in achieving organizational goals and objectives. The inapplicability of equipment for combat (or any military mission), intelligence gathering, patrols, etc., can reveal an organization's removal from the ideal. Since equipment procurement is derived from organizational design for the pursuit of organizational goals, the less useful a given set of equipment is for achieving these goals the more likely that there is a mismatch between design and mission. This mismatch can be revealed by weapons platforms that do not work in a particular environment (cold, sandy, urban) or in systems that do not support particular missions (overhead technical intelligence platforms in an environment that requires human intelligence (HUMINT)). In either case, these limitations or defects can hamper organizational adaptation, particularly at the lowest organizational levels where equipment apportionment is relatively fixed and the equipment supplied is specific and narrow in its functionality and applicability.

Equipment designed for supporting regular combat operations can prove quite inadequate for operations in rapidly changing environments (particularly urban) against non-doctrinal enemies. Employing large, burdensome, and destructive weapons platforms in a non-standard fashion might prove impossible. Furthermore, training with and expectations for equipment can be misguided when applied in an unorthodox fashion. The perceived, relative safety of an armored vehicle or tank in open terrain can morph into a liability in a close fight where mobility

is restricted and the enemy has access to high explosives and the Explosively Formed Penetrators (EFPs) in use in Iraq:

*"Our biggest distractions were the guys with the armored vehicles. As light fighters, we were happy with HMMWVs. The armored equipment would come in...these guys were like, hey, we have steel all around us, we're good. The problem is that you don't have 360 degree visibility. So they were so confident that their big vehicle was untouchable. The insurgents would walk up behind it or go beneath it and place an IED and walk away. At that point, you have a catastrophic kill. You don't have that person outside doing a patrol around the vehicle. Their mentality is that if you stay inside then you are safe."*<sup>479</sup>

Because the U.S. Army goes to war with the equipment it has and this equipment is not easily altered (either in form or in assignment to organizational stocks) tactical adaptations to or with this equipment are difficult if not impossible to make. As Smith asserts, "we are using weapon systems in ways for which they were not originally designed and purchased."<sup>480</sup> One soldier describes how a unit utilized what were otherwise unusable pieces of equipment in SSR operations:

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<sup>479</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

<sup>480</sup> Smith, Rupert, *The Utility of Force*, Op Cit, p. 299.

*“When we first went north to Baghdad we didn’t even take the Paladins. We had all our equipment shipped over and we left it in Kuwait. Within a month, we had the Paladins shipped us because you could mount crew-served weapons on them; we started using those as pill boxes.”<sup>481</sup>*

*“We started using the Paladins on patrols because they had a crew served capability. The HMMWVs we had were light-skinned and we had no up-armor initially. We started morphing into the up-armor HMMWVs, we started creating our own armor. We started getting up-armor trucks after the fact.”<sup>482</sup>*

In regard to equipment, the capacity for tactical organizational adaptation is quite circumscribed and limited to crucial, however simple, modifications. Although equipment can be effectively bastardized or enhanced it cannot be fundamentally changed to better match the exigencies of missions for which the equipment was not designed. In order to make significant organizational equipment changes to address non-standard environments and adversaries, the larger institution must adapt: the procurement and assignment of weapons platforms is a higher-order budgetary and acquisition function.

In support of tactical level requests and initiatives and to offset equipment shortfalls, the Pentagon began a series of swift equipment procurement efforts. Two significant and interrelated problems were given extensive attention: a lack of armor and the prevalent use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). As OIF progressed, the DOD fielded more up-armored

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<sup>481</sup> Soldier deployed to Baghdad (Early 2003, 2006-2007), Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid.

High-Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) and produced versions of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles. In order to evaluate countermeasures to IEDs, the DOD established and funded the “Joint IED Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), directed by retired Army Gen. Montgomery Meigs, to work with various national laboratories, the Department of Energy, contractors, and academia.”<sup>483</sup> JIEDDO successfully developed electronic jamming systems (IED Countermeasures Equipment (ICE) and Warlock) utilizing low power radio frequency energy to block signals from cellular telephones and long-range cordless telephones, Neutralizing Improvised Explosive Devices with Radio Frequency (NIRF) “which produces a very high-frequency field at a very short range that can neutralize an IEDs electronics,”<sup>484</sup> and various electronic jammers, radars, X-ray equipment, robotic explosive ordnance disposal equipment, physical security equipment, and an Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV). Between 2004 and 2006 JIEDDO spent approximately \$6.1 billion in its efforts.<sup>485</sup> Additionally, DOD instituted the Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI) to ensure that the latest versions of equipment were available as fast as practicable. RFI has reduced acquisition time to weeks or days for some products.<sup>486</sup>

With seemingly limitless funding, the DOD and the U.S. Army can react to sub-unit needs and requests fairly quickly by by-passing the traditional (and slow) procurement process. Immediate mission-critical adjustments can be made within longer-term acquisition cycles on an

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<sup>483</sup> Wilson, Clay, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Iraq and Afghanistan: Effects and Countermeasures, CRS Report for Congress, 25 September, 2006, p. 3.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid, pp. 3-6.

<sup>486</sup> Ibid, p. 6.



as-needed basis. But short-term reactions ensure that organizational adaptability will suffer; the pace of operations and adaptability of the enemy reduces the adaptive timeline far within the development, testing, and acquisition cycles of even the most responsive institution. Without significant changes to acquisition drivers (strategy and doctrine), the institution is reduced to reacting to environmental cues and sub-organization requests. The institution's primary mission will drive overall research, development, and acquisition; without adjustment to this mission, the institution will remain reactive and always (at least) one step behind changes in the environment. As a result, equipment designed for 'standard' missions and purposes will stall tactical adaptability when tactical organizations are involved in 'non-standard' missions.

### **6.3.2 Funds**

The funding that U.S. Army units receive in cash and in kind (in equipment, rations, services, etc.) through the Congressional appropriations process is vast. Specified funds are budgeted and encumbered for operational needs such as weapons platforms and fuel. More general funds exist for discretionary spending on SSR projects and unaddressed unit requirements. Funds are available either through the normal Congressional budgetary process or through additional spending bills tailored to the needs of the institution.

The flexibility granted to units in how discretionary funds are spent is partly the result of the complexity of operations and uncertainty inherent to the environment in Iraq. A rapidly changing environment defies the best predictions of any set budget or list of forecasted spending requirements. Within very general guidelines, commanders are free to spend money on projects and initiatives that will support changing mission requirements as the need arises. Funds have been used to acquire indigenous support and shift alliances, to build schools, to address

unbudgeted needs, and to assist in the gathering of information. Small units and individuals often use available funds to establish relationships with locals either through direct payment or by addressing individual or local community needs. One soldier described how using even relatively small amounts of money or remunerations can reap rewards that would otherwise be unattainable:<sup>487</sup>

*“You go and buy a pack of reds and two cokes for \$20 and you find out where everything is at. You find someone influential and give their daughter a beanie baby and their son a new soccer ball. You treat their women with respect when you go into a house. This is how information is gathered and relationships are established.”*<sup>488</sup>

Although general, congressionally mandated funding is tailored to long-term projects and major weapons systems, the availability of unspecified funds builds in adaptability. When commanders and soldiers have access to large supplies of funding, particularly in a chaotic and largely impoverished environment where unemployment is rampant, initiatives that either directly or indirectly enhance relationships also build trust and help the spread of invaluable information that is not readily available through normal collection means. Furthermore, because

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<sup>487</sup> It is important to note that this can also have negative consequences insofar as gifts and rewards can undermine the role of men in the family as traditional providers or breadwinners. A balance must be attained between using this tactic to gain information and trust and undermining familial relationships and roles.

<sup>488</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion (September 2002-August 2003) and Baghdad (January 2005-January 2006), Personal Interview, 8 October 2008.

monies spent or appropriated can be tracked, the efficacy of particular enterprises can be measured. Tactical units can address shortfalls in design and capacity by using funds for achieving goals by alternative and unplanned means.

### **6.3.3 Intelligence**

Three problems that have plagued intelligence operations generally also beset operations during OIF: the type and nature of intelligence gathered was inadequate for the environment; classification and dissemination procedures limited the transfer of vital information and; the amount of intelligence gathered and shared, whether appropriate or not, was overwhelming.<sup>489</sup> Each restricted the easy flow of accurate information to where it is required in the decentralized operations prevalent in Iraq: tactical level units engaged in planning, on patrol, or in contact.

The intelligence apparatus that the U.S. Army took into OIF was derived from a national collection and processing system designed to counter threats from large state-based forces, principally those emanating from the former Soviet Union and its partner states. A perennial focus on state-based adversaries circumscribed the adaptive capacity of the overall U.S. intelligence architecture during OIF: it was optimally constructed to detect indicators not necessarily relevant during SSR or simultaneous full spectrum operations. Instead, “after four decades of primary focus on a fixed enemy, our intelligence capabilities became singularly optimized to peer at ICBM fields, observe submarine fleet anchorages, scan bomber-packed airfields, monitor Warsaw Pact tank divisions, and—with a network of spies—look deep inside

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<sup>489</sup> See, Hughes-Wilson, John, *Military Intelligence Blunders*, Carroll and Graf, New York, 1999, pp. 344-45.

the Soviet governmental and military bureaucracies.”<sup>490</sup> Additionally, “institutional momentum and past successes kept investments steady or growing in high-technology systems, and one can surmise that satellites and other overhead collectors continue to receive robust resourcing.”<sup>491</sup>

The trend in intelligence spending indicates a desire for investing in more and more sensitive equipment capable of detecting corporeal changes in the environment indicative of movement, signals emissions, and weapons deployment. But this equipment is less than optimal for trying to discern enemy intent or for separating friend from foe in a largely anonymous urban environment devoid of identifiable tactical vehicles, electronic battlefield signatures, or advanced weapons platforms. Apparently, the same full spectrum capability assumed of combat-ready forces infused with advanced technologies was imputed to national and U.S. Army intelligence systems. Operations in OIF gave the lie to these assumptions. An attempt to translate technological capabilities designed for collecting on state-based forces to a decidedly mobile yet technology bereft insurgency revealed significant weaknesses in national and U.S. Army collection capabilities.

This assumed intelligence capability pervaded U.S. Army doctrine, tactical training, and operational planning. U.S. Army units came to depend on an enhanced intelligence capability that only significantly aided in the conduct of a narrow range of combat operations and was less than useful for informing SSR and simultaneous full spectrum operations. One of the key tenets of U.S. Army tactical doctrine is that units will be provided with near perfect, full spectrum, battlefield intelligence. This provision allows commanders to act in a ‘time and place of their choosing’ and to ‘decisively shape operations and engagements.’ Although largely considered a

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<sup>490</sup> Barno, David, “Challenges in Fighting a Global Insurgency,” *Parameters*, Summer 2006, p. 21.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid*, p. 22.

‘future’ capability throughout the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the assumption of near certainty seeped into current doctrine through transformational osmosis.<sup>492</sup> What was ignored was the fact that near certainty would have been impossible even in conventional combat operations and sheer fantasy in the simultaneous full spectrum operations occurring in Iraq.

Nonetheless, tactical doctrine was (and is) infused with manifold examples of capabilities derived from intelligence that was difficult if not impossible to obtain in Iraq in a timely fashion. Thus, operations, reliant upon capabilities premised on non-existent or poorly formed intelligence, are much more difficult to plan and execute than doctrine would lead a practitioner to believe. Even with the employment of human ‘sensors,’ the intelligence picture was murky: human operators untrained in the nuances of intelligence collection in a complex environment did not make up for a dearth of requisite intelligence.<sup>493</sup> The use of human sensors to inform the overall intelligence picture did not yield the battlefield or informational dominance predicted by

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<sup>492</sup> McMaster, H.R., “Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War,” Op Cit, p. 55.

<sup>493</sup> The relationship between soldiers and intelligence collection systems is confusing. On the one hand, soldiers are supposed to be ordained with extensive capabilities because of a purportedly pervasive intelligence collection capacity. This implies that soldiers will be trained assuming that correct and ample intelligence will be available from other, external intelligence sources. On the other hand, if the technological intelligence system is incapable of gathering appropriate types of information then soldiers are expected to fill the gap in collection requirements. This assumes that soldiers are capable of gathering the intelligence that is supposed to be collected by other systems. In either case, given a complex and unfamiliar environment, neither the technological systems nor the common soldier is appropriately resourced, designed, or trained (respectively) to collect intelligence outside of the abilities of machines or beyond that which is trained. Thus, the system is limited and the built-in backups do not exist.

tactical doctrine: the intelligence picture in Iraq was inadequate for shaping operations out of contact or for providing any sort of ‘dominance.’ To remedy this problem, soldiers and small units made adaptations to the conduct of their operations and increased their contact with the environment and the enemy. The failures of technology and passive sensors were made up for by the establishment of an integrated intelligence/information gathering network developed by soldiers and their personal relationships with local Iraqi populations.<sup>494</sup>

An affinity for applying familiar yet inappropriate terms (like describing individuals as sensors) to new concepts or conditions is indicative of how disruptive complex environments can be to standing doctrine and perceptions. The depiction of cars, trucks, and motorcycles as insurgent ‘platforms’ or the description of populations as ‘human terrain’ are both examples of the persistence of legacy thinking and occur because overall intelligence and operations systems (to include their associated lexicon) are slow to adapt to new circumstances and new environments.<sup>495</sup> The application of old terms to new conditions is a symptom of the persistence of legacy thinking and emblematic of an unwillingness or incapability to adapt to non-doctrinal environments.

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<sup>494</sup> McMaster, H.R., “Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War,” *Op Cit*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>495</sup> Barno argues that familiar terms are applied because the system is designed to detect what these terms symbolize. ‘Platform’ is traditional term used for describing conventional threat weapons systems and vehicles but does not easily translate to insurgent equipment. The term is misused because of the novelty of complex environments. Intelligence sensors designed for state-based threats are set to collect on platforms, not common vehicles surrounded by other common vehicles. For discussion see, Barno, David, “Challenges in Fighting a Global Insurgency,” *Op Cit*, p. 23.

The legacy of linear doctrinal thinking also pervaded the intelligence planning process. The traditional process assumes a relatively predictable doctrinal enemy and environment. Thus, it is a poor framework for planning operations in a complex environment populated with itinerant, non-standard adversaries. “The IPB [Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield] process, as presented in doctrine is in part, deficient. It provides an optimum framework, as designed, for determining certain and limited futures. However, it is a poor framework for uncertain environments where a range of futures or true ambiguity is experienced. Step four of the IPB process directs intelligence analysts to determine enemy COA [Course(s) of Action] as well as choosing the most likely and most dangerous courses of action. It is just not possible to determine enemy intentions in a range of futures or a truly ambiguous environment.”<sup>496</sup> Traditional IPB, designed for conventional battlefield planning is insufficient: “because the population is the key to success in a counterinsurgency, COIN IPB must start with the people and their issues.”<sup>497</sup> Traditionally, IPB, by the nature of the term, does not incorporate people’s issues. Overlaying a conventionally oriented battlefield preparation process onto a non-linear and complex SSR operation can cause myriad problems for planners. An uncomplicated and sequenced concept of operations is just not possible in a complex environment.

What makes a complex environment even more ambiguous for a force like the U.S. Army is its non-standard character. The U.S. Army possesses a conventional set of tools, equipment,

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<sup>496</sup> Brown, Lawrence T., *The Enemy We were Fighting was not what We had Predicted. What is Wrong with IPB at the Dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2004, p. 44.

<sup>497</sup> Mansoor, Peter R. and Mark S. Ulrich, “Linking Doctrine to Action: A New COIN Center-of-Gravity Analysis,” *Military Review*, September-October, 2007, p. 46.

and doctrine (and thus training) predicated on the successful attainment of measurements derived from force-on-force combat information. Each of these inputs contributes to cognitive patterns and product development routines that are relevant almost solely to a conventional conflict and might have zero applicability in an unconventional struggle. As Schultz and Dew argue in their examination of the conventional IPB planning and analysis process, “composition, disposition, and strength are all quantitative measures that add up the personnel, units, weapons, and machines of modern conventional armies.”<sup>498</sup> When presented with non-doctrinal adversaries, analysts have little recourse but to try to adapt conventional IPB to an unconventional environment. This is a difficult task since the tools and procedures available assume a preponderance of quantitatively measurable indicators available in the environment. Unfortunately, quantitatively measurable indicators are few and far between in a complex, unconventional environment and might be of little value, because of the nature of the mission, even if they are obtainable.<sup>499</sup>

Conventional indicators are unlikely to manifest during a complex insurgency. Thus, applying conventional standards and techniques makes little sense in alternative environments filled with unorthodox adversaries. While the absence of alternative approaches to intelligence

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<sup>498</sup> Schultz, Richard H. and Andrea J. Dew, *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias: The Warriors of Contemporary Combat*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2006, p. 24.

<sup>499</sup> Other elements of conventional intelligence planning and gathering hamper adaptive approaches to the collection process. For instance, the *Handbook of Intelligence Analysis* guides soldiers to develop an order-of-battle template that focuses on tactics, training, effectiveness, and logistics relevant to conventional and nuclear operations and includes instructions applicable to issues of biography, unit history, uniforms, and insignia. Without guides for gathering and processing intelligence on non-doctrinal threats, intelligence analysts will utilize the skills that they have been taught. Unfortunately, these skills may only be relevant to conventional warfare. See, *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.



planning and collection will force adaptation it will be costly in terms of the time needed to develop new methods, products, and cognitive skills. In Iraq, this problem was compounded by a lack of analytical capability among soldiers used to interpreting an abundance of combat-related data provided by advanced technological sensor systems. But the *deus ex machina* they had planned for and counted on never arrived. When presented with non-combat conditions and an environment where technological systems offered little functionality or value-added analytics, intelligence analysts found their analytical capacity wanting. “Apparently, younger officers and enlisted personnel were unprepared for their assignments as intelligence specialists and possessed ‘very little to no analytical skills.’ A network that was supposed to link intelligence teams and convey time-sensitive information among them—as well as permit them to tap into an evolving database—worked so poorly that it was virtually non-existent.”<sup>500</sup>

In an ambiguous environment, an alternative method for divining enemy intent and predicting enemy movements is to track their actions and develop products based on behavioral and tactical trends. During OIF, this was accomplished at the unit level and then correlated at the institutional level:

*“We tracked and briefed emerging enemy TTPs on a daily basis.”<sup>501</sup>*

*“On my second tour we carefully gathered AARs [After Action Reviews or Reports] from the section through the battalion level where these AARs were*

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<sup>500</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Op Cit, p. 322.

<sup>501</sup> Soldier deployed to Baghdad (March 2003-August 2003, November 2004-November 2005), Personal Interview, 1 July 2008.

*correlated. Multiple AARs were sent higher. Some of them went to places like the Center for Army Lessons Learned and some of them went to the Schoolhouse at Fort Huachuca.”*<sup>502</sup>

The complexity of the environment and the enemy in Iraq required significant and creative adaptations to standard intelligence planning and collection methods, particularly in the absence of the appropriate technological tools and analytical skills necessary for this type of environment. For instance, multiple measures were developed to interdict the use of IEDs: the development of actionable intelligence to predict IED emplacement; the employment of active combined-arms patrolling to look for suspicious activity; the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and sniper teams to monitor roads during times of likely emplacement; emplacing remote TV cameras (RTV) at known trouble areas and; using CA teams to work with local nationals.”<sup>503</sup> Additionally, units adapted to the inadequacies of supporting technologies. Commercial off-the-shelf Technologies (COTs), such as digital cameras, were used to support Close Target Reconnaissance (CTR) and other operations. UAV optics and satellite imagery were considered insufficient for providing the detailed images demanded by urban operations. UAV optics were not “resolute enough and satellite imagery is not reliable enough.”<sup>504</sup> One soldier describes some of the difficulties inherent in relying on technical intelligence and information gathering capabilities:

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<sup>502</sup> Ibid.

<sup>503</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, p. 90.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid, p. 91.

*“We had satellite imagery come across, which is nice. You can see where you are going, who’s there, and what is involved. But you come to rely on it and if the weather is bad then your only means of communications is down. There are no photos, no FM [Frequency Modulation] communications, or satellite communications. You go from having everything to nothing. Our technology can make you stumble. I wouldn’t want to be away from it but it can slow you down a bit.”*<sup>505</sup>

Even when the appropriate intelligence is collected and analyzed, myriad sharing problems can affect whether or not the intelligence is distributed or pushed to the appropriate organizational levels in a timely fashion. “The present classification system with its various compartments is an obstacle to the timely flow of information. It must be reexamined with an eye on making it simpler and quicker to navigate.”<sup>506</sup> Most of these problems stem from the sensitivity of the type and nature of various collection assets. Certain information is only transmitted along secure channels to appropriately cleared individuals. Insufficiently cleared soldiers might not have access to information and intelligence reserved for personnel with Top Secret and Compartmentalized clearances. The end result might be that time-sensitive and vital information is not disseminated, even when the information is of critical import to soldiers or units in contact. This is unacceptable in a rapidly evolving environment where the speed of

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<sup>505</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

<sup>506</sup> Cole, Myke, “From the Military: Applying 4GW Theory to the Intelligence Community,” <http://www.d-n-i.net>, Accessed 18 October 2008.

intelligence dissemination might be more important than how well the intelligence is analyzed. Applying this intelligence cannot wait on a thorough examination by intelligence professionals. Instead, the demands of rapidly evolving situations and operations require that some analysis is conducted by the end user, regardless of training or occupational specialty. As Knights and White argue, “the trend in counterinsurgency operations in Iraq is towards increasingly focused and intelligence-led activity.”<sup>507</sup> This activity requires the collection and spread of information by untraditional means and through unconventional sources regardless of traditional security constraints:

*“We have made every soldier an intel asset. He is down there doing his own IPB. You have eleven-bravos [11B MOS—Infantry] who are self-teaching because of the information that they have available to them now. They understand the import of that information. They are becoming mini-intel non-commissioned officers down there doing their own IPB. But it is always stifled by those folks that want to have more security requirements...and don’t want to provide security clearances to all levels and all folks...I think that we need to get past that real quick.”*<sup>508</sup>

Some adjustments to this system have been made according to tactical needs in Iraq. Adaptations to the collection and dissemination systems have been made so that information is

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<sup>507</sup> Knights, Michael and Jeffrey White, “Iraqi Resistance Proves Resilient,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, November 2003, p. 24.

<sup>508</sup> General Chiarelli, Peter, Telephone Interview, 27 October 2008.

not necessarily analyzed prior to its dissemination. Instead, intelligence is analyzed in parallel with ongoing operations so that if decisions must be made on the ground, the soldiers or officers charged with this decision making will be appropriately resourced:

*“We are pushing HUMINT down a lot further than we ever have before. That’s an area where we are starting to catch up. I think that we understand the importance of low-tech solutions. I think we also understand that there are high-tech solutions that we just don’t need to keep at the national, strategic, or operational levels—we need to get them down to the individual soldier.”*<sup>509</sup>

The type of intelligence required by operations in Iraq is expansive and far outside the realm of traditional, conventional needs. “When intelligence officers find themselves immersed in gathering information for actionable intelligence in a ‘small war,’ they become amateur sociologists, cultural and negotiation experts, and a host of other things.”<sup>510</sup> The type of intelligence needed reflects the type of operation(s) being conducted. In simultaneous full spectrum operations, multiple channels of intelligence are required. Increasing the available types of intelligence requires a corresponding increase in the expertise of the end user. Given the narrow and specialized training afforded most junior leaders and soldiers in the U.S. Army, this is unlikely to be the case. What is likely is that vast amounts of intelligence will be shared with users who have little capacity for interpreting and acting on the information provided.

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<sup>509</sup> Ibid.

<sup>510</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Op Cit, p. 321.

This problem is confused further by the ubiquity of communications equipment and data-sharing devices on the battlefield in Iraq. While intelligence is developed at an arithmetic rate, sharing (and associated modifications to the information shared) is conducted at an exponential pace. Each individual who receives intelligence has the opportunity to inject alterations based on current information and individual interpretation prior to horizontally and vertically retransmitting the data. The volume of intelligence and raw information being shared can overwhelm decision makers involved in a fast-paced tactical mission. Additionally, if the intelligence being spread is tainted it will only be further corrupted as it is rapidly shared across individuals and units. Like a tactical game of telephone, both bad and good intelligence can be disrupted or attenuated the further away it travels from its source. Although this problem can be mitigated by sending intelligence through digital transmissions and text, much time-sensitive information is shared via voice or in person once it is received from an external source.

Intelligence sharing is widely viewed as a palliative simplifier in a complex environment. But the exponential transmission of intelligence can sometimes obfuscate an already confused situation. Although an assortment of tactical adaptations were made to how intelligence is gathered, analyzed, processed, and transmitted in Iraq, various problems continue to challenge the largely conventional intelligence cycle and sharing process. Intelligence operations in OIF are still dominated by legacy planning and collection tools, systems, and technologies developed during the Cold War. Because operations are driven by intelligence, particularly in a complex environment, organizational adaptation suffers from an architecture designed for a uni-dimensional adversary operating in a linear environment despite efforts to circumnavigate these structural limitations.

#### **6.3.4 Material & Technical Resources Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- Under normal circumstances, equipment is budgeted for and procured to assist units and individuals in completing missions that support strategy. The U.S. Army's acquisition system is generally slow but changes to fielding initiatives have reduced the time required to acquire systems and equipment as the need arises. Static equipment stocks can reduce the pace of adaptation when the equipment provided is inappropriate for the mission assigned.
- Readily available specified funds assist the institution and sub-organizations in meeting budgeted needs. Readily available general funds allow units to adapt to circumstances not projected in budgets. General funds can afford units the opportunity to shape operations to better fit overall mission objectives.
- An intelligence architecture designed for state-based enemies but applied in non-standard environments against unconventional adversaries leads to collection, analysis, and dissemination problems in doctrine, training, and operations. Enhanced communications networks can be a double-edged sword: the normal dissemination and sharing system can be bypassed thus increasing the flow of intelligence to end users; spontaneous and unchecked dissemination chains can also enable the sharing of too much intelligence or corrupted information. The burden is on the end user (who might or might not be appropriately trained) to interpret, potentially, volumes and varied types of intelligence. The potential for adaptation through intelligence sharing is enormous but a corresponding increase in generalized operational and intelligence training is required for junior leaders and soldiers.

## **6.4 EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE**

### **6.4.1 Consultation**

Consultation with national and local police and military forces and informal citizen's associations (tribes, paramilitary organizations, Sons of Iraq, etc.) enabled the U.S. Army to gather information and make adjustments that would not normally have occurred. The local knowledge, language skills, familiarity with the environment, and long-standing relationships with the population that these forces maintained assisted the U.S. Army in altering perceptions of the organization's role in Iraqi social and security affairs. Consultation, for the most part, enhanced community knowledge and contributed to putting a localized face on U.S. Army operations.

One of the most significant contributions of consultation with formal and informal organizations in Iraq was the intimate information that these organizations provided. Most critical was the intelligence gathered and shared by local forces during and after the conduct of day-to-day operations. The Iraqi National Guard (ING) and the Iraqi National Police (INP) in particular were instrumental in gathering information formally and informally (out of uniform) and then sharing it with U.S. Army units. "The thing that made them [Iraqi National Police] more effective than anything else, though, was their ability to collect intelligence, their ability to be tied into the local community and to get information that others could not."<sup>511</sup> Joint patrols with these forces enabled greater contact with the community and the establishment of the

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<sup>511</sup> Malkasian, Carter, "Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare: A Discussion by Senior Military Scholars," The National Press Club, Washington DC, 22 July 2008.



mutual trust and understanding demanded by successful SSR operations. Consulting with these forces greatly enhanced the knowledge base of the U.S. Army and the adaptability of small units that were assigned to work in tandem with these forces.<sup>512</sup>

#### **6.4.2 Direct Action**

Direct action can be summed up as those actions taken either in consultation with the U.S. Army or independently to support or supplement the U.S. Army's overall mission in Iraq. Direct action missions involve intimate contact with the environment or the enemy by individuals and units of forces external to the U.S. Army. Many of these duties were assumed by coalition forces, the Iraqi National Police (INP), the Iraqi National Guard (ING), and various local citizens' movements supportive of the U.S. Army's mission.

Entities engaged in direct action enabled adaptation by sharing information about operational mission success and failure. By completing their missions with differing levels of resources, tactics, and capabilities (and success), external units also added complexity to the environment and decreased the adaptive capacity of competing organizations (i.e. the insurgency). Through external unit engagement with the environment and information sharing, U.S. Army units gained operational knowledge from a different perspective without a significant expenditure. U.S. Army units were able to test new TTPs, probe and sense the environment

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<sup>512</sup> It is worth mentioning here that this process is routinely interrupted by the movement of units within and out of the theater of operations. Personal relationships are the sine qua non of effective consultation at all levels. When units and particular individuals redeploy or are assigned to other Areas of Responsibility (AOR), established personal relationships and trust networks are weakened if not broken entirely. This problem applies to local nationals as well as INP and ING units and personnel.

vicariously, and ultimately learn through an alternative lens. The addition of personnel, equipment, and cognitive capacity by other actors contributing through direct action expanded the range of adaptation beyond what was indigenously possible.

### **6.4.3 Cooperation**

Cooperation is intrinsically tied to consultation and direct action because it blends elements of both. U.S. Army units, particularly at the tactical level, relied on cooperation with indigenous partners to train ING and INP forces and for conducting sensitive raids and other tactical actions. Additionally, intelligence was developed and shared through cooperative efforts and security was established by surrogate forces liaising with U.S. Army units. Adaptation does not always have to be competitive: it is many times collaborative and cooperative. Working with tribes and local familial organizations increased the ambient security provided to the local population while reducing the need for committing and exposing large numbers of U.S. Army units in hostile areas. This type of cooperation has elicited positive results in the past in Iraq: “relying on tribes to provide security is not a new phenomenon for Iraq. The British did so in the 1920s; later Saddam Hussein became a master of using them to ensure the continuity of his rule, particularly once the formal Iraqi state and the Ba’ath Party withered in the 1980s and 1990s.”<sup>513</sup>

One of the most significant events in OIF was the result of cooperation between individual U.S. Army (and other branches) units and key leaders throughout Iraq, particularly in

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<sup>513</sup> Long, Austin, “The Anbar Awakening,” *Survival*, Volume 50, Number 2, April 2008, p. 67.

al Anbar Province.<sup>514</sup> “The key to the turnaround on the western front was a strategy of partnership between local leaders and U.S. officers. Insurgencies grow from the bottom up; they must be defeated by turning the population against the rebels village by village, city by city. No general, no matter how brilliant, can accomplish this by maneuvering his army. Instead, the army and the police must spread out and remain among the population.”<sup>515</sup> Individual units leveraged local organizations and individuals for information used to specifically target rebel and insurgent actors. “The locals knew who the extremists were; the Americans brought the hammer. After the tribes, now aligned with the Americans, had been successful in killing some Qaeda members, the bulk of the Sunni population joined with them.”<sup>516</sup> Cooperative efforts in one area fuelled cooperation in other areas. Knowledge of how to plan and conduct operations with high regard to the local environment and threat organization actors increased dramatically through cooperation with local forces and tribes.

#### **6.4.4 External Assistance Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- Consultation with local actors and forces enhanced intelligence gathering operations and expanded the base of tactical unit knowledge. Adaptability grew as consultation

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<sup>514</sup> Cooperation developed out of local dissatisfaction with the methods and actions of foreign fighters. Bing West describes the feelings of local tribes in Al Anbar: “within the tribes, bands of warriors were chafing to take revenge after two years of seeing their tribesmen killed, their women ‘married,’ and their businesses shaken down for ‘protection.’” Acting on this knowledge allowed for U.S. forces to develop relationships with tribal leaders at an opportune moment. See, West, Bing, *The Strongest Tribe*, Random House, New York, 2008, p. 54.

<sup>515</sup> West, Bing, “In Victory’s Direction”, *National Review*, 15 September 2008, p. 52.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*

increased and previously unattainable information was exploited to operational advantage.

- Alternative means of probing, sensing, and engaging the environment through external personnel with differing tactics and equipment elicited different enemy responses and environmental cues observable by U.S. Army units. Thus, the range of targeted adaptations expanded beyond the innate capabilities of individual organizations.
- Cooperation with local leaders and forces increased the array of legitimate operations conducted by U.S. Army units. Cooperation revealed intelligence and TTPs that shortened the adaptive timeline. Time-sensitive information regarding enemy tactics, identities, and locations permitted proactive adjustments to planning and execution cycles.

## **6.5 CRITICAL GROUP PROCESSES**

### **6.5.1 Application of Skills & Knowledge**

U.S. Army unit training prior to OIF was almost solely designed for combat operations. Therefore, individuals and units were predisposed for applying skills and knowledge related to conducting combat missions. Even after entering the SSR phases of OIF, many U.S. Army units continued to develop combat related skills and knowledge. SSR operations (at least initially) were considered a distraction from regular, conventional training and preparation. Some units, upon return to home station, reacted by incorporating the standard with the unconventional:

*“When we returned we went back to our basics. We trained FM 7-8, did a lot of role playing, convoy live fires; MOUT, and IEDs were incorporated. Even though we stuck to our basics, our grassroots, we continued to move forward.”<sup>517</sup>*

Some failed to make this transition even though the difficulties of applying legacy skills to a new environment were recognized:

*“Our first train-up was purely HIC. We got back after doing that and transitioned from HIC to SOSO. Those were still part of our METL but we didn’t focus a lot of effort on those, we were more about killing bad guys.”<sup>518</sup>*

Confusion about what was trained and what was required mounted:

*“You were in a reactive mode just long enough to realize that this is a very, very fluid environment. You had to have very, very fluid tactics. I don’t know if we ever said the word doctrine while we were over there because it just didn’t apply.”<sup>519</sup>*

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<sup>517</sup> Soldier deployed on initial invasion and to Samawah, Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

<sup>518</sup> Soldier Deployed on initial invasion (September 2002-August 2003) and Baghdad (January 2005-January 2006), Personal Interview, 8 October 2008.

<sup>519</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

Applying many of the kinetic skills and conventional knowledge gleaned from decades of combat training and experience was difficult in OIF (because of the nature of the environment and associated operations) and often times proved counterproductive on a variety of fronts. “Units must rely on the minimum force needed to subdue insurgents. In fact, in COIN, ‘the more force you use, the less effective you are.’ In a COIN environment, the use of fires can affect intelligence collection adversely, and intelligence is the lifeblood of COIN. When we capture an insurgent, we can exploit his knowledge of the terrorist network; when we kill an insurgent, his knowledge of the terrorist network dies with him.”<sup>520</sup> The skills and knowledge relevant to combat depended on standard task performance which emphasized reflexive and practiced behaviors. Deliberate decision-making was subordinated to standard, approved responses and trained patterns of conduct supported by advanced weaponry and technological aides. Technology and routine were meant to replace individual initiative and decision-making: the battlefield was supposed to be programmatic and predictable. But in a fluid unconventional environment, predictability is unlikely attainable. As David Harper argues, “counterinsurgency is not a technological task. It is a face-to-face, hand-to-hand, street-to-street process of gaining trust and building consensus while providing security. Technology allows us only to find and kill insurgents. Low-tech interaction between Soldiers and civilians allows us to end the insurgency itself.”<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>520</sup> Nagl, John A. and Paul L. Yingling, “The FA in the Long War: A New Mission in COIN,” *Field Artillery Magazine*, July-August 2006, p. 34.

<sup>521</sup> Harper, David, “Targeting the American Will and Other Challenges for 4<sup>th</sup>-Generation Leadership,” *Military Review*, March-April, 2007, p. 101.

Reacting to a simultaneous full spectrum environment required the development of skills and abilities not germane to combat training and experience. This occurred slowly in Iraq because the institutional Army failed to react to environmental stimuli countering long-standing beliefs and conceptions regarding modern combat operations. The development of new methods of collecting and sharing information and improving unconventional knowledge-bases contributed to enhanced adaptive abilities. Gompert argues that “these abilities depend on a self-aware blending of experience-based intuition and information-based reasoning. They can be utilized effectively by employing what is known as *rapid-adaptive* decisionmaking techniques, in which intuition provides initial direction, creating time and access to information, expanding the opportunity to reason and to check and correct intuition, and so on—all done at speeds required by fast-breaking circumstances.”<sup>522</sup> In spite of institutional resistance to the realities of Iraq’s operational environment, individuals and small units developed knowledge and skill bases that defied doctrine and conventional thought. Necessity drove adaptations that helped units overcome the limitations of their narrow knowledge, skill, and training foundations.

### **6.5.2 Task Performance Competency**

Enhancing task performance competency requires the timely inculcation of knowledge and skills gained through experience into training and execution. In order to ensure that knowledge and skills are translated into tasks supporting the overall mission, organizations must develop evaluative metrics that measure task output. In a complex environment with non-standard

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<sup>522</sup> Gompert, David C., *Heads We Win: The Cognitive Side of Counterinsurgency (COIN)*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 37.

missions and tasks, establishing competency or relating this competency to varied mission sets is difficult to accomplish: no previously determined set of measurements will accurately capture task performance competency. Utilizing standard, dichotomous sets of measurements (Success/Failure, Yes/No) would not work in Iraq; U.S. Army units instead needed a set of scaled measurements that could only be developed by information gathering and processing systems completely foreign to the conduct of and assessment of standard combat operations.

The pervasive use of standard, conventional combat measurements of task performance competency during OIF highlighted the disconnect between these measurements and what was actually relevant for assessing effectiveness against insurgent forces in a simultaneous full spectrum environment. As body counts and other combat-relevant measurements were being tallied, the effectiveness of the counterinsurgency went unmeasured. Using standard measurements also ensured that subordinate units and organizations performed tasks that enhanced their combat performance metrics even if these tasks were somewhat or wholly irrelevant for the assigned mission.

The confusion between tasks performed and the mission at hand cascaded from the highest to the lowest levels in the U.S. Army even after years of conducting OOTW in Iraq. “General Casey’s statements and actions suggest that he believed U.S. units were present in country not to end the insurgency or al Qaeda’s involvement in it, but rather to train the Iraqis to fight the insurgents themselves. Unit commanders at the brigade level and below repeatedly state that their goal was training the Iraqis to conduct a Counterinsurgency. Few stated that their mission was defeating the insurgency, securing the population, or ending sectarian violence. Nevertheless, most operational summaries relate the number of insurgents killed and captured, and the number of weapons seized. These patterns suggest that subordinate officers believed that



higher commands assess them based upon these raiding metrics, despite the apparent focus on training Iraqi Security Forces.”<sup>523</sup>

Establishing measures of effectiveness (MOE) for various non-combat tasks suffered from the habitual use of quantitative indicators developed for rating operations in a combat environment. MOE using qualitative indicators simply did not exist in sufficient levels to assist in the assessment of task performance competency during SSR operations in Iraq. As Jim Baker asserts, “staff officers at various headquarters and developmental agencies can generate reams of quantitative measures.”<sup>524</sup> But quantitative measures were not very useful for measuring task performance when organizations assumed the missions of providing population security or reducing the effectiveness of the insurgency: “quantitative data may not be sufficient to judge the degree and intensity of popular feeling, or more importantly, the way that these feelings are distributed throughout geographic or demographic strata.”<sup>525</sup>

Inappropriately rating the effectiveness of either the insurgency or the U.S. Army in achieving organizational goals was not limited to approaches within defense circles. The use of quantitative measures suffused analysis conducted within and outside of the U.S. Army. “There was general agreement that measures of the insurgency (including the effectiveness of countermeasures) were simply unavailable. Media-created measures, including the number of U.S. casualties (which had reached 2,000) and Iraqi civilian casualties (then estimated at 26,000)

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<sup>523</sup> Kagan, Kimberly, “From ‘New Way Forward’ to New Commander,” *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, 10 January 2007—10 February 2007, p. 14.

<sup>524</sup> Baker, Jim, “Systems Thinking and Counterinsurgencies,” *Parameters*, Winter 2006-07, p. 42.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*

were of dubious value in helping the United States assess the state of the insurgency. Ironically, however, they provided the insurgents with measures.”<sup>526</sup>

New, non-standard missions required the development of new, non-standard tasks. Typically, these tasks were developed at the unit level as individual soldiers charged with executing new missions struggled with ways to translate action into organizational objectives and vice versa. But without an effective and relevant set of MOE to measure the end result of tasks performed in support of operational missions, competency was difficult to derive. Establishing success in pursuit of intent or a desired end-state necessitates developing alternative measurement methodologies. “A systemic methodology for reviewing organizational metrics is necessary within operational headquarters. Military organizations already have various forms of this type of review, but the review focuses on quantitative performance in mechanistic processes (the science of warfare). Endless meetings to force accountability and transparency in readiness rates and personnel status as well as logistics flows permeate the culture. What does not commonly exist however is the same mentality for the operation processes (the art of warfare). All headquarters must assess their effectiveness in achieving their intended vision in order to link the actions of its departments to its vision.”<sup>527</sup>

One effective adaptation to the difficulties of developing MOE for simultaneous full spectrum operations was to relax controls on training. This effectively allowed small units to work on developing flexible tasks and enhancing individual decision making; if the larger organization was incapable of producing qualitative MOE then the responsibility for measuring

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<sup>526</sup> Schwartz, Alan, Scenarios for the Insurgency in Iraq, U.S. Institute of Peace, Special Report #174, October 2006, p. 2.

<sup>527</sup> Lopez, Rafael, On Learning: Metrics Based Systems for Countering Asymmetric Threats, Op Cit, p. 59.

competency and effectiveness would fall on small unit practitioners. Junior leaders responsible for developing and conducting tasks in support of organizational and institutional goals had to develop training and localized MOE to assist in the conduct and assessment of mission success.<sup>528</sup>

*“We conducted a de-centralized training approach with very little collective training above the platoon level. Our focus was on squad leader and platoon level planning. We also focused on leaders’ cognitive abilities and their ability to deal with rapidly changing situations and changes within the spectrum of conflict.”*<sup>529</sup>

Individual and small unit responsiveness was substituted for a lack of institutionalized qualitative MOE; effectiveness and competency were rated by decision makers while knowledge, skills, and innovative TTPs were inculcated into training by small units:

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<sup>528</sup> This approach is argued in the 1/25 SBCT Initial Impressions Report: “Commanders and leaders should utilize innovative approaches in the development of flexible TTPs that instill instinctive leadership down o the platoon level. This agile mind set can help bridge some of the doctrinal gaps when conducting operations in a COIN environment.” Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. 1.

<sup>529</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (Spring-Summer 2005) and Al Anbar Province (Fall 2005-Spring 2006), Personal Interview, 1 July 2008.

*“Our TTPs were constantly adjusted depending on the threat. Existing TTPs were effective in some locations, i.e. Northern Iraq, and ineffective in others, i.e. al Anbar. This was almost entirely due to the nature of the threat.”*<sup>530</sup>

*“We would go from high-intensity to low-intensity based on insurgent activity. Increases in foreign fighters would cause us to go more high-intensity. Once you cleaned those areas out you would transition back to a low-intensity focus on the insurgency.”*<sup>531</sup>

Bypassing normal training strictures and allowing junior leaders to develop training and assessment programs enabled the development of non-standard tasks and evaluation methods at the small unit level. As long as clear intent was provided, small units could rapidly adapt task performance to mission accomplishment. Assessing effectiveness could then occur at the small unit level. Failure or success, and all variants in between, was all too obvious to small units during the conduct of operations. Various inputs (measured during and after task accomplishment) were adjusted to increase competency following this assessment. Although the development of comprehensive qualitative MOE for non-standard and unconventional missions would greatly assist the institution in evaluating overall task performance competency in simultaneous full spectrum operations, allowing small units familiar with conducting decentralized operations (because of their intimacy with the environment they have an inherent

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<sup>530</sup> Ibid.

<sup>531</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

ability to determine their effectiveness and competency) to adjust training with knowledge and experience was an effective short-term adaptation.

### **6.5.3 Command, Control, and Communications**

Standard and conventional Command, Control, and Communications (C3) significantly changed during OIF to reflect the necessity of decentralized operations and devolved decision-making authority. Normal command and control procedures and mechanisms were modified to echo the environment of Iraq where small unit operations, both friendly and enemy, dominated the landscape. To properly engage this environment, “Commanders employed mission command, in which they provided clear intent and empowered subordinates to act on these opportunities within this intent. Brigade and battalions allocated resources and conducted concurrent planning in support of subordinate operations.”<sup>532</sup>

Although the brigade was and is the predominant organizational form for operations in Iraq, rarely was an entire brigade involved in any given operation during SSR phases. Most operations in OIF were handled by companies, platoons, or squads resourced and supported by battalion and brigade assets. One brigade staff officer commented on the planning and conduct of operations in Iraq:

*“We didn’t do brigade or battalion operations. The information we put together was based on how the Army works in Iraq. It was for the battalion but was*

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<sup>532</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. 27.

*drilled down to the point where the brigade was breaking it down for company if not platoon level operations. The operations we conducted were based on the targeting process and were executed by a company or a platoon.”*<sup>533</sup>

Despite a penchant for centralized training that begins with individual skills and ends (typically) with brigade-wide exercises, missions in Iraq required the nimbleness of small units being resourced by larger, parent units. For most tasks an entire company, let alone a battalion or brigade, was too large for the effective conduct of a mission. Stealth and speed were priority skills; mass and overall firepower were not decisive factors.

U.S. Army units altered command and control relationships with innovative approaches to information sharing that enhanced the awareness of individual units and empowered junior decision-makers. The normal chain of command, although still in operation, became more collaborative as dictated by the pace and nature of operations in OIF. Collaboration between small units and parent units (through the company and up to national level resources, depending on the mission) was supported by an extensive information sharing architecture. Commanders, particularly during the combat phase but also in later phases were able to use the Army Battle Command System (ABCS) to track their own forces, template threat forces, and communicate information and visual intelligence rapidly.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>534</sup> ABCS consists of a variety of subordinate C3 systems including: Maneuver and Control System (MCS), Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (AFATDS), Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below (FBCB2), All Source Analysis System (ASAS), Battle Command Sustainment Support System (BCS3), and Air and Missile Defense Workstation (AMDWS). See discussion of ABCS in Fontenot, Op Cit, p. 394.

Collaboration among soldiers, both vertically and horizontally across unit boundaries and echelons of command, spontaneously erupted along inter-netted communications lines. Soldiers took advantage of these collaborative tools to share information and obviate many unnecessary formal RFIs. The RFI system followed normal command and control procedures and in some cases took days to fulfill. But the pace of operations and the presence of varied threat organizations required the near instantaneous sharing of information as well as TTPs. “Lower level leaders must be empowered to develop and implement TTPs that are decentralized, flexible and tailored to the battle space in the ever changing environment associated with stability operations in urban terrain.”<sup>535</sup> Many of these efforts resulted in information sharing that was, largely, uncontrollable but nonetheless contributed to operational success and enhanced unit planning capabilities.

Borne out of the necessity of operations in OIF and in support of emerging collaborative efforts by individuals and small units, the U.S. Army developed software named ‘Green Force Tracker’ that allows “soldiers around the world to communicate with each other using instant messages and Web-conferences, capture and transmit screenshots, and edit documents together.”<sup>536</sup> “Green Force Tracker is an Army adaptation of IBM’s Lotus Same-time commercial instant-messaging software.”<sup>537</sup> Collaborative tools enable individuals and small units too pool knowledge and experience across unit lines at a pace that would be impossible if

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<sup>535</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. viii.

<sup>536</sup> Osborn, Kris, “Army Fields New Instant-Messaging Software Program,” Army Times, 17 November 2008, p. 22.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid.

normal command and control procedures were followed. Relaxing command and control procedures to better reflect operational requirements enhanced both formal and informal information sharing. In doing so, parent units were able to enhance the capabilities and adaptability of subordinate units. “Responsiveness was greatly enhanced at lower echelons by employing mission command, enabling battalions and company commanders to increase the tempo of operations to a level where the enemy is forced to react to friendly actions and cannot gain the initiative.”<sup>538</sup>

#### **6.5.4 Cognition and Behavior**

Cognition and behavior are shaped by training, experience, and culture.<sup>539</sup> In OIF, individual cognition and behavior, formed by preparation for kinetic engagements, limited the range of responses and adaptations that units were capable of making. “Our own regulations, bureaucratic processes, staff relationships, and culture complicate the ability of our soldiers and leaders to achieve synchronized nonlethal effects across the battlespace. Our traditional training model, still shuddering from the echo of our Cold War mentality, has infused our organization to think only in kinetic terms.”<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>538</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. 28.

<sup>539</sup> Cognition and behavior are mutually reinforcing. Cognition shapes behavior and behavior reinforces cognition.

<sup>540</sup> Chiarelli, Peter W. and Patrick R. Michaelis, “Winning the Peace: the Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations,” Op Cit.



Individuals and units tend to think and respond in terms related to their training. Being immersed in concepts, terms, and behaviors inculcated through conventional training ensured that, in the face of an alternative environment, units would be slow to change. Conventional training emphasized rote responses to set-piece environments—tasks to standard;<sup>541</sup> a shifting environment required the development of undiscovered tasks that correspondingly, were never trained. Training that is focused narrowly on the accomplishment of tasks instead of end-states or commander's intent truncates individual and unit abilities to perceive and adjust to changing environmental stimuli. Thus, OIFs' evolution into a simultaneous full spectrum operation resulted in a cognitive adaptation deficit with units struggling to adapt conventional tasks to non-standard but desired end-states.

Simultaneous and decentralized full spectrum operations in Iraq required units to adapt to the environment and the enemy quickly. This necessitated obtaining clear guidance from higher headquarters regarding the desired end-state and at a minimum, some conceptualization as to how to achieve this end-state. Without the appropriate training in matching standard tasks with unorthodox missions, individual units struggled with achieving the objectives assigned by higher commands. Compounding this problem was the difficulty that higher commands had with developing the appropriate missions in the first place. The range of tasks required for SSR operations, most of which were untrained, left commanders with the difficult job of developing

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<sup>541</sup> An interesting anecdote captures this mentality even in headquarters units: "The sectarian conflict between Shia and Sunnis goes back 1500 years, and the folks at the US Embassy in Baghdad believe it can be solved in 2 years with power point presentations detached from the complex dynamics defining the conflict that don't readily make for neatly delineated line-charts." al-Waeli, Kadhim H., *Iraq: Cultural/Political and Media Observations*, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Camp Victory Baghdad, 9 November 2007, p. 3.

clearly stated missions that could be conducted by units bereft of an appropriate training regimen. As a result, when the environment changed or the war-gamed plan dissolved, many units had a difficult time reacting appropriately. Without a clear mission that could be supported by conventional tasks, units that ran into environmental challenges either had to await further guidance or had to invent skills extemporaneously. Clear guidance and preparation based on this guidance, however non-doctrinal the supporting tasks might have been, were the *sine qua non* of achieving the desired end-state for missions in OIF. “In order to develop self-synchronizing units, there are certain critical components that the relevant units, or systems must possess. The first is the endstate or goal that the unit is trying to achieve. Whether the word is endstate or effect or aim at this point is not very important. What is important is for that unit to know what it is trying to achieve. It must clearly understand its purpose.”<sup>542</sup>

Enabling greater organizational adaptation requires that inputs to individual and unit cognition and behavior change.<sup>543</sup> Experience in OIF and to a lesser degree OEF and corresponding changes in the culture of the U.S. Army based on this experience have enabled a degree of change across the institutional Army. Complex environments, like those found in each of these operations, place units in the position of having to self-organize based on a set of rules,

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<sup>542</sup> Hales, Samuel E., COIN Modeling: an MDMP Technique for Planning Counter-Insurgency Campaigns, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 26 May 2005, p. 20.

<sup>543</sup> In other words, “leaders must create a climate that fosters adaptability.” See, Dorsey, David, et al, Adaptability and Adaptive Performance: Current Findings and Future Directions for Building Adaptive Forces, Personnel Decisions Research Institutes, Inc., Hampton, VA, 15 July 2006, p. 8.

leadership, mission and organization.<sup>544</sup> Training that forces individuals and units to adapt to the commander's intent or desired end-state is required to revolutionize cognition and behavior.

#### **6.5.5 Critical Group Processes Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- Interaction with the environment and the enemy in simultaneous full spectrum operations forced small units to expand skill and knowledge sets (through innovative training and information sharing) beyond those trained prior to OIF and in spite of initial institutional resistance to change.
- Relaxing controls on training and shifting the focus of operational preparation to small units allowed junior leaders to localize MOE based upon experience, trial, error, and success. Inputs to competency were adjusted as familiarity with decentralized maneuvers in simultaneous full spectrum operations increased.
- Collaboration among soldiers across unit boundaries, both vertically and horizontally, bypassed normal C2 chains and the formal RFI process. These informal adaptations for rapidly evolving operations spurred formal adjustments to how information is shared among individuals and units.
- Cognition and behavioral adaptations at the small unit level, through contact with the environment and the enemy, drove institutional cultural changes that in turn altered perceptions of the role of individuals and units in support of non-standard missions.

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<sup>544</sup> Karmer, Eric-Hans, *Organizing Doubt: Grounded Theory, Army Units and Dealing with Dynamic Complexity*, Copenhagen Business School Press, 2007.

## 6.6 LEARNING

### 6.6.1 Knowledge Collection

Knowledge collection has always been a priority for U.S. Army units but the process was significantly enhanced during OIF through the emplacement of personnel from CALL in tactical units, through individual unit initiatives to collect knowledge in easily transferrable forms, and by communications capabilities allowing for the easy storage and transfer of information between individuals and units. AARs (consisting of a review of what was to be accomplished as well as the strengths and weaknesses presented during any unit action) were used extensively to gather information following the completion of a mission during OIF.<sup>545</sup> In addition to commonly employed AARs unit leaders also conducted patrol debriefs (many times with the assistance of staff personnel (typically a representative of the unit S2 section (intelligence) or by company-level Field Artillery personnel))<sup>546</sup> to collect and correlate lessons learned regarding enemy activity and friendly reactions to this activity:

*“Executive summaries and lessons learned were recorded after every operation, no matter how small. This information was stored and shared through a portal*

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<sup>545</sup> AARs are also used extensively in training as a way to recapitulate events and capture success and failure.

<sup>546</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, p. 78.

*system available to all units within our task force and also those at home station preparing to deploy to relieve us.”<sup>547</sup>*

*“We had an S2 representative attached to our Combat Outpost. We would give all our information to this guy and it would be filtered back up through the company to the battalion. The battalion would receive information from all of the COPs. The battalion would do the analysis.”<sup>548</sup>*

The liberal use of debriefings was only hampered by the unavailability of personnel to officially capture lessons from sub-unit missions or by the preponderance of other mission requirements. “Battalion S-2 sections were not able to debrief all patrols due to the sheer number of patrols, additional taskings (such as supporting detainee operations) and the limited number of personnel available in the S-2 shop. S-2 sections did, however, make a considerable effort to debrief all patrols that had significant contact with direct force and IEDs in order to effectively derive as much information as possible. Patrols were usually debriefed at the company level by the Fire Support Team (FIST), who then forwarded significant or relevant information up to the battalion

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<sup>547</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (Spring-Summer 2005) and al Anbar Province (Fall 2005-Spring 2006), Personal Interview, 1 July 2008.

<sup>548</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

S-2. The Company FSOs used a standard debriefing format, but time-sensitive and actionable information was sent either by FBCB2 or FM during the patrol.”<sup>549</sup>

Officially, reams of post-action information were collected and recorded by CALL and by unit representatives and were distributed widely through various channels (discussed below). But knowledge collection was not limited to what was captured through official sanction; many informal methods were employed for information gathering and tacit knowledge collection was enhanced by frequent interaction among soldiers on routine missions. Informal knowledge collection and internalization not only enabled individual soldiers and units to retrieve valuable information when needed but also affected individual and unit capacity for knowledge application and task performance adaptation:

*“Informal lessons were more important than formal. You get the structured broad overview from the formal. Right seat ride and broad spectrum ‘this is what is going on.’ When you walk a particular area and get to talking, that is when you start getting the informal perspective. Questions can be asked and you can talk things out.”*<sup>550</sup>

Informal knowledge collection also aided in the development of a capacity for learning:

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<sup>549</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry), Op Cit, pp. 56-57.

<sup>550</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

*“Now will they learn exactly? No, because Samarra is not the exact same thing as Mosul. And so you can’t bring the lessons over from here to there. But what they started developing is capacity. He or she could go from Samarra to Mosul and say, it is not the same here, but you know what, I can figure this out.”<sup>551</sup>*

And for unlearning when and where appropriate:

*“You had to be careful of what you learned. If a guy was digging he may be emplacing an IED or he may be looking for water if the pump house wasn’t working. We fixed the pump house so that the number of people digging for water decreased.”<sup>552</sup>*

The bulk of information available regarding lessons learned in Iraq has been formally collected and is available in either printed or graphic form to be used by deploying and deployed units to inform planning and operations. These lessons can be used to build training scenarios, to inform the professional military education system, and to help build or reform doctrine. More importantly, the lessons that have been internalized as tacit knowledge (developed through actual experience and the informal sharing of lessons by a particular individual or unit in contact with the environment and the enemy) are what is used to give context to any formal collected knowledge: formal or explicit knowledge is tempered by the level of acquired tacit knowledge

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<sup>551</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Wong, Leonard, Personal Interview, 6 November 2008.

<sup>552</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

of the end-user. Although it is difficult if not impossible to capture tacit knowledge, it is invaluable to the knowledge collection, storage, and retrieval process. Without a body of tacit knowledge to inform and support explicit knowledge, the lessons captured by debriefs and AARs would be of far less value. Informal knowledge collection enables individuals to rapidly incorporate formal knowledge into a corpus of information allowing for comprehensive and subjective understanding. Repeat exposure to this knowledge, when incorporated with tacit knowledge gained, enhances collective knowledge retention.

By laboriously capturing lessons learned through a formal process and by encouraging informal exchanges of information among units and individuals, the U.S. Army comprehensively added to the knowledge collection process and thus enabled greater knowledge retention through iterative deployments to the theater.

### **6.6.2 Knowledge Transfer**

The transfer of mission-useful knowledge was significantly slowed during the initial phases of OIF but increased as units and individuals reacted to realities on the ground. A preliminary focus on combat operations, or derivatives thereof, ensured that explicit knowledge transfer was infused with lessons related almost solely to combat activity. Of course, informal and tacit knowledge transfer and collection, respectively, reflected knowledge gleaned from adaptations made to adjust to a simultaneous full spectrum environment but without an official complement of explicit knowledge transfer, these lessons would achieve something less than full impact. Formal systems for knowledge transfer among units and individuals were not fully developed until after conditions deteriorated in Iraq. Not until later in the campaign was full spectrum



knowledge collected and transferred in a timely fashion and in accordance with operational requirements and needs.

Units moving in and out of Iraq on a fairly regular basis caused uneven and imperfect transfers of knowledge. On the one hand, deployment and redeployment necessitated that incoming and outgoing units share information both formally and informally, however incompletely this was accomplished. But units leaving Iraq departed with a significant store of tacit knowledge gained from experience and interaction with the local population. This information could not be easily passed through either formal or informal channels and the process of units relieving one another had a deleterious and abrupt effect on the collective body of knowledge captured by any particular unit. “Instead of staying in country until the job is done, commanders and entire units sever relations with a contested population and essentially force fresh arrivals to learn anew.”<sup>553</sup> Hashim describes the troop-rotation process as ‘insidious’ and argues that this policy allows little time for the development and institutionalization of area specific knowledge. Worse yet, “The unit might, for example, be unable to transfer that institutionalized knowledge to the one taking over from it. There may simply be no mechanism for doing so, or, as is often the case, the unit’s knowledge may be limited to a very small group of harried and harassed officers who simply do not have the time to pass information to their successors, or are not tasked effectively to do so.”<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> Vrooman, Stephen A., A Counterinsurgency Campaign Plan Concept: The Galula Compass, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 26 May, 2005, p. 46.

<sup>554</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Op Cit, p. 338.

Although replacing the knowledge lost through the departure of a unit from the theater was impossible, over time individual units and the institution developed methods for transferring large volumes of lessons and knowledge acquired to be incorporated either in training, education, or on future deployments:

*“During both tours, lessons learned were incorporated into future operations. This was a priority in the force protection realm. As for formal lessons learned, I can tell you that when I went back to the Schoolhouse for the MICCC [Military Intelligence Captain’s Career Course] they were all about incorporating TTPs into the curriculum. As one of the few combat vets in the class at that point, I often found myself on the podium relaying my experiences from the war.”<sup>555</sup>*

*“That is why we have the Center for Army Lessons Learned, that’s why they have embedded lessons learned analysts deployed in each of the divisions, that’s why we conduct routine VTC linkages with those that have deployed and those that are getting ready to deploy. The institution listens in on that and then makes those program of instruction [POI] adjustments that are necessary given that which we are hearing from the field.”<sup>556</sup>*

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<sup>555</sup> Soldier deployed to Baghdad (March 2003-August 2003, November 2004-November 2005), Personal Interview, 1 July 2008.

<sup>556</sup> General (Ret.) Wallace, William, Personal Interview, 21 November 2008.

Knowledge was also transferred in theater formally and informally through various means and to address a number of shortfalls in unit SOPs, doctrine, and typical collection and sharing practices that inhibited the free-flow of information:

*“When you are talking about any COE, the best lessons learned don’t come from an AAR, and INSTUM, or an OPSUM. I truly believe that they come from soldiers talking to other soldiers; everybody telling war stories...bring this, don’t bring that...use 550 cord or don’t. They are informal but they help in the formal adaptation process as a unit...Functionality overrides everything, particularly uniformity.”<sup>557</sup>*

*“Everybody was allowed to talk back and forth and information thus got out. This was unlike a formal brief where nobody wants to talk and nobody wants to raise their hand and the only outcome is an hour or two wasted from everyone’s life. I think that the Army is going to a more informal system and I think that it is better. The young gunner sees a lot that perhaps a senior guy doesn’t see. That can be brought to the table and everybody can learn from it. The informal way is probably the best way to go.”<sup>558</sup>*

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<sup>557</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>558</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, and Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

Informal methods had the effect of enabling the transfer of information on an as needed basis:

*“If you asked a chat room for a response, you would get 10 replies that you could choose from almost instantly. If you sent an official RFI, you could forget it; you had to wait for 3 days to get a response and by that time it was irrelevant.”<sup>559</sup>*

*“If you are doing things informally, you have to apply a sanity check but I would rather be making the sanity check, as a leader, than having someone else do it for me. People would reply on MIRC from across the country. It was a lot better than the formalized version. At the brigade, you are just pulling from your battalions and you are pushing up to higher. Higher is just summarizing the whole country across a set of indicators or questions that they deemed important. I don’t think that I ever read a Corps INTSUM because it was one hand over the world crap that I couldn’t use to give to battalions.”<sup>560</sup>*

In addition to informal methods developed in theater among soldiers, other knowledge transfer databases and websites were established upon the return to garrison. Younger officers familiar with the collaborative potential of the internet established a number of helpful websites like Companycommand.com and PlatoonLeader.org for returning and deploying junior officers. “The explosive growth of social networking and online collaboration tools have produced a groundswell of activity among the Army’s younger officers, many of whom grew up with the

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<sup>559</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul (November 2004- October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid.

Internet. Communities of practice are rapidly spreading knowledge across the Army in ways never before possible. These sites were launched without the Army's financial support. These were absorbed into the Army.mil network as part of BCKS [Battle Command Knowledge System].”<sup>561</sup>

Formally, U.S. Army units, sometimes independently and sometimes with institutional support or direction established websites to enable knowledge transfer within and among units. CavNet was launched by then MG Peter Chiarelli on the Secret IP Router Network (SIPRnet)<sup>562</sup> and “the LANCERSNET website forum was developed by the brigade to share lessons learned across the AOR. The site's proponent was the brigade S-3, and was maintained by the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) Liaison Officer (LNO) attached to the brigade throughout the operational deployment.”<sup>563</sup> Formal methods of knowledge transfer were important for the transfer of large volumes of required information and knowledge on a continuous basis.

As the process of knowledge transfer matured over time, it was enhanced by increasing levels of individual experience and tacit knowledge retention. Cataldo argues that the greater the levels of task and group experience an individual or group of individuals has, the greater their levels of information sharing.<sup>564</sup> Information sharing and knowledge transfer is enhanced by an

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<sup>561</sup> FCW Staff, Army Lessons Learned: Junior Officers Sharing Battlefield Experiences in Near-Real Time Adapt Faster than the Army's Top Military Leaders, 15 July 2006, [http://www.fcw.com/print/12\\_25/news/95271-1.html](http://www.fcw.com/print/12_25/news/95271-1.html), accessed on 3 July 2008.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid.

<sup>563</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 2 (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) (Draft), Op Cit, p. 3.

<sup>564</sup> Cataldo, Marcelo, et al., “The Effect of Personnel Selection Schemes on Knowledge Transfer”, Working Paper, CASOS, Undated, p. 49.

organization's structure and the level of connectivity within this structure. Cataldo also argues that organizational structure has "a strong effect on the amount of total knowledge transferred with and without turnover, with the fully-connected structure as the most beneficial for knowledge transfer, while the hierarchical structure was the most restrictive."<sup>565</sup> Although hierarchical organizations (like the U.S. Army) would normally be restricted by design constraints in the amount of potential knowledge transferred (even during periods of little personnel turnover), advances in communicative capacity and the enhancement of formal and informal knowledge transfer dulled the effect normally caused by a hierarchical design. Aided by increased tacit knowledge among individual officers and soldiers, as OIF deployments progressed, and by the development of various transfer mechanisms, the U.S. Army was able to overcome many organizational constraints and inhibitors to the successful and timely transfer of knowledge.

Flattening unit hierarchy happened both formally and informally during OIF in response to the need to accelerate methods of knowledge transfer. Chiarelli and Smith argue that the U.S. Army can further flatten organizational structures by "doing more to enable unconstrained horizontal integration and rapid knowledge transfer. Sometimes the most critical information on the battlefield doesn't come from the chain of command, but from external sources. We must enable those most in need of that information to access it without the filters a chain of command traditionally imposes."<sup>566</sup> Continued experiments with knowledge transfer mechanisms and individual unit and soldier adaption with the tools available for increased information sharing

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<sup>565</sup> Ibid.

<sup>566</sup> Chiarelli, Peter W. and Stephen M. Smith, "Learning from Our Modern Wars: The Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future," *Military Review*, September-October 2007, p. 7.

will ensure increased organizational flattening via advanced levels of organizational knowledge transfer.

### 6.6.3 Knowledge Integration

The knowledge collected and transferred by the U.S. Army during OIF has been integrated into doctrine, education, and training and has been internalized as tacit knowledge by OIF participants. The process of knowledge integration by units and individuals has improved throughout the OIF campaign as more and more units have trained for and deployed to theater. Cragin argues that an organization's *absorptive capacity* for knowledge is derived from the amount and type of knowledge and capability that an organization possesses as it seeks to integrate new knowledge.<sup>567</sup> Certainly, the initially combat-centric U.S. Army has increased its absorptive capacity of alternative types of knowledge by engaging in simultaneous full spectrum operations in Iraq. Experience and subsequent adaptations have led to a greater capacity for integration and modifications of key inputs like doctrine and policy:

*“The Army has done a very good job in my eyes of creating doctrine that appreciates the strategic situation that it finds itself in. I am pointing to FM 3-0 Operations, FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency, and FM 3-07 Stability Operations. The Army has done a remarkable job in adapting its training for the wars in which it*

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<sup>567</sup> Cragin, Kim, et al., “Sharing the Dragon’s Teeth: Terrorist Groups and the Exchange of New Technologies,” RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 16.

*commonly finds itself in particular the combat training centers have completely revamped how they do business.”*<sup>568</sup>

*“Once upon a time we thought that we could do combat operations and then we would follow that with what we used to call operations other than war. What we have come to realize in this current operational context, and perhaps it has always been that way but we weren’t focused on it, is that war is war and that stability operations have an equivalent place in the execution of operations because the fact of the matter is, in my judgment, that major combat operations provide...they set the conditions for that which follows and what follows is the creation of sufficient stability in order for other elements of national power to be applied to the problem.”*<sup>569</sup>

The U.S. Army also integrated knowledge derived from experience in OIF into individual and unit training upon entry into the Army:

*“So, if you were to look at basic training back in the early part of this century, about 2000, 2001, the amount of field training that a soldier got was something on the order of 7-10 days. Today, they do three field training exercises and frequently, movement to the field is a training exercise in itself, where they have to actually do a tactical movement to a training site and en route to that training*

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<sup>568</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Nagl, John, Telephone Interview, 14 September 2008.

<sup>569</sup> Ibid.



*site they might have to react to cultural circumstances that are presented to them, react to IEDs and provide security and that sort of thing. Importantly, in virtually every one of our training bases, we have Forward Operating Bases that are designed to give the soldier at least the context of what the physical environment might be that he is going to be presented with when he goes down range.”<sup>570</sup>*

And into instructor training:

*“The Army itself got smart and filtered lessons down so that everyone would know what was happening on the battlefield. All of the evaluators had to have been deployed to Iraq. The only jobs that we could get on returning from Iraq was training and evaluation, JRTC or NTC, teaching, drill sergeant, or ROTC.”<sup>571</sup>*

And at the training centers:

*“In 2006, JRTC had FOBs set up. When we went through, the cantonment area was set up as a FOB and when you left you went to a patrol base and you operated out of a patrol base.”<sup>572</sup>*

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<sup>570</sup> Ibid.

<sup>571</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>572</sup> Soldier Deployed to Baghdad (March 2004-March 2005), Personal Interview, 22 September 2008.

*“They turned Hohenfelz into Iraq...the Army was trying to transfer the knowledge that we acquired while we were deployed...all of our scenarios were driven by people that just got back from Iraq.”<sup>573</sup>*

This had significant structural implications:

*“Our present cycle of deploy/reset/deploy is ideal for real inculcation of lessons learned. We’ve skipped ahead dramatically this decade in terms of training and organization. The modular TO&Es [Table of Organization and Equipment] and our COIN doctrine would both been studied to death absent this conflict.”<sup>574</sup>*

One noteworthy problem the U.S. Army and individual units stumbled upon when trying to integrate knowledge was that it resisted translation into circumstances foreign to its genesis. Much of the knowledge gathered during OIF was localized, temporal, or only pertained to specific unit types:

*“Very few SOPs or TTPs would work for the brigade. They would probably work at the company level or below.”<sup>575</sup>*

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<sup>573</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>574</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, E-mail Interview, 13 September 2008.

<sup>575</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

The process of ‘lateral transmission’<sup>576</sup> of unit lessons was dealt with in one of three ways: 1) robust analysis for generalization was conducted by CALL or another supporting organization for institution-wide lesson sharing and integration; 2) localized or unit specific knowledge was characterized as such and was not integrated widely but on an as-needed basis or when then the knowledge was applicable to the environmental conditions at hand or; 3) individual leaders digested broader lessons and made individual decisions as to whether and how to integrate knowledge into training and operations. For instance:

*“TTPs were much different the second time. We walked down the road in front of tanks to clear IEDs—that didn’t work out very well. We started using dismounted patrols and UAVs together. We got much more accomplished dismounted than we did driving down the road.”*<sup>577</sup>

*“I think that it is human nature to take what did work and try to use it in the next scenario. What you need to take into a situation is that you need to adapt very quickly. You start coming up with contingencies and that helps the adaptation*

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<sup>576</sup> Huba Wass de Czege argues that “complexity and novelty conspire to make lessons learned in one mission potentially non-transferrable to the next.” See Wass de Czege, Huba, “Rethinking IO: Complex Operations in the Information Age,” *Military Review*, November-December 2008, p. 17.

<sup>577</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

*process. You need to think of what they are going to do next and try to head it off. That is what we were supposed to do.”*<sup>578</sup>

*“We were a kinetic Army who understood how to destroy the enemy. Today, we have made tremendous progress in our understanding of counterinsurgency, and we have truly built capacity around brigade combat teams who can be task organized to do almost anything.”*<sup>579</sup>

The institutional Army lagged far behind in adaptation speed when compared to small units and individuals. The standard method for the institutional integration of knowledge requires in-depth (and time consuming) analysis for the broad applicability of lessons which are either shared through publication, are reflected in changes in doctrine, or are incorporated into lessons in the professional military education system. At the lower unit levels, knowledge integration and adaptation naturally occurred much faster. Small unit leaders could make adjustments based upon local knowledge without consideration of whether this knowledge translated into broader lessons and without conducting lengthy in-depth analysis. With the availability of data sharing tools, small unit leaders transmitted knowledge and conveyed the operational nuances necessary for interpreting and employing this knowledge. Integrating explicit knowledge created by similar units at similar echelons requires far fewer interactions than developing and integrating requisite tacit knowledge for the same mission or operation.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>578</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>579</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Crider, James, E-mail Interview, 22 September 2008.

<sup>580</sup> See discussion of tacit knowledge in Cragin, et al, Op Cit.

Any formal or informal method for integrating explicit knowledge and then translating it into tacit knowledge through application significantly decreased the time required to make adaptations. Immediate or timely knowledge integration at the small unit level and the subsequent reintegration of this knowledge by the institution enabled comprehensive assimilation throughout the theater. The institution and its sub-components created a supplementary and overlapping integration techniques ensuring cyclical knowledge integration across the force.

#### **6.6.4 Learning Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- Formal and informal methods of knowledge collection enabled adaptation through robust collection and application in the building of tacit knowledge. Collective knowledge retention is abetted by formal and informal collection through iterative exposure to the environment and methods employed to reinforce collection and retention procedures.
- The cycling of units in and out of as well as across the Iraqi theater of operations necessitated but also disrupted knowledge transfer. Individuals and units formally and informally established methods for transferring knowledge on an immediate, requested, and as-needed basis. Information sharing tools enhanced this process and flattened organization structures that would normally retard the timely transfer of knowledge.
- Knowledge collected and transferred was integrated into doctrine, education, and training and has been internalized as tacit knowledge through experience. Problems of lateral transmission of knowledge were overcome by small unit interpretation and individual decision making. The normal pattern of integration adapted to include supplementary individual, unit, and institutional initiatives.

## **6.7 CONCLUSION: THE BROADER EFFECTS OF ADAPTATION**

Most if not all institutional adaptations made during the course of events in OIF were driven or inspired by adaptations (both successful and unsuccessful) made at the small unit level in reaction to organizational design and changing environmental stimuli in the pursuit of mission success. The dearth of policy, guidance, education, and training for simultaneous full spectrum operations necessitated rapid and continuous changes by individual decision makers and units in contact with the environment. Lessons learned became lessons applied: units grappled with adjusting inputs (across the range of inputs described and discussed in this chapter) and outputs to match tactical action with strategic intent while the institution, albeit slowly at first, adjusted resources, policy, doctrine, and strategy to better match and augment successes at the sub-unit level.

In total, the U.S. Army developed (at the unit and institutional levels) and maintains a massive organizational capacity for self-evaluation and adaptation. The communications, training, and education architectures, even if not intentionally designed for this purpose, allow for manifold adaptive efforts across the force. Merging resources with formal and informal methods of adaptation within and across units enabled significant adjustments to be made in response to changing environmental cues. Integrating vast flows of information from disparate sources at the institutional level combined with experimentation and innovative decision making at the unit level led to the creation of an adaptive learning apparatus where inputs, outputs, and learning were adjusted either incrementally or inclusively depending on the nature and general relevance of the adaptation(s) made. Although initial adaptive efforts were not integrated into the core structures of the U.S. Army (culture, doctrine, training, intelligence, etc.) at first, individual and small unit successes were incorporated (over time) into the total force through

organizational osmosis, leadership, and through bottom-up adjustments. For any substantive adaptations to take hold, mutually reinforcing adaptation had to occur at many levels:

*“Unless the larger institution adapts, what you will have is individual units finding individual solutions; some of which might be right and some of which might be wrong but none of which gets transferred. And so you end up learning the same lessons over, and over again.”<sup>581</sup>*

Gehler argues likewise: “Individual learning can be present and understood by the organization’s members, but institutional learning does not occur unless the institution accepts, integrates, and disseminates this individual learning, and it becomes widely accepted.”<sup>582</sup>

Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency, contains a laundry list of adaptations that serve as a record of changes made across the force during OIF:

- Forces that learn COIN effectively have generally—developed COIN doctrine and practices locally;
- Established local training centers during COIN operations;
- Regularly challenged their assumptions, both formally and informally;
- Learned about the broader world outside the military and requested outside assistance in understanding foreign political, cultural, social and other situations beyond their experience;

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<sup>581</sup> Colonel (Ret.) Mansoor, Peter, Telephone Interview, 12 September 2008.

<sup>582</sup> Gehler, Christopher P., *Agile Leaders, Agile Institutions: Educating Adaptive and Innovative Leaders for Today and Tomorrow*, U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle, PA, August 2005, p. 5.

- Promoted suggestions from the field;
- Fostered open communications between senior officers and their subordinates;
- Established rapid avenues of disseminating lessons learned;
- Coordinated closely with governmental and nongovernmental partners at all command levels;
- Proved open to soliciting and evaluating advice from the local people in the conflict zone.<sup>583</sup>

“These are not always practices for an organization to establish. Adopting them is particularly challenging for a military engaged in a conflict. However, these traits are essential for any military confronting an enemy who does not fight using conventional tactics and who adapts while waging irregular warfare.”<sup>584</sup> The explicit acknowledgement in this manual that “learning organizations defeat insurgencies; bureaucratic hierarchies do not”<sup>585</sup> is evidence that the institution not only received but integrated organizational adaptations and in a sense achieved a level of self-awareness missing prior to the commencement of OIF.

Although the development of FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, and the subsequent publication of FM 3-07, Stability Operations (establishing a unique and comprehensive set of

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<sup>583</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency, December 2006, p. x.

<sup>584</sup> Ibid.

<sup>585</sup> Ibid.



tasks for stability operations),<sup>586</sup> demonstrate an institutional recognition of past and current difficulties encountered in Iraq and the enormous strides taken to adapt to these difficulties, other doctrine and institutional structures have yet to significantly change. Doctrine, perhaps by design and certainly abetted by organizational structure, has a way of insulating itself from significant change. In tandem with a change-resistant structure, dogmatic prescriptions in doctrine can significantly buffer any attempts at reform or the development of alternative strategies. “Today’s military change process produces a sub-optimal strategy, because feedback

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<sup>586</sup> **Establish Civil Security:** Enforce Cessation of Hostilities, Peace Agreements, and Other Arrangements; Determine Disposition and Constitution of National Armed and Intelligence Services; Conduct Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration; conduct Border Control, Boundary Security, and Freedom of Movement; Support Identification; Protect Key Personnel and Facilities; Clear Explosive and CBRN Hazards. **Establish Civil Control:** Establish Public Order and Safety; Establish Interim Criminal Justice System; Support Law Enforcement and Police Reform; Support Judicial Reform; Support Property Dispute Resolution Processes; Support Justice system Reform; Support Corrections Reform; Support War Crimes Courts and Tribunals; Support Public Outreach and Community Rebuilding Programs. **Restore Essential Services:** Provide Essential Civil Services; Tasks Related to Civilian Dislocation (Assist Dislocated Civilians, Support Assistance to Dislocated Civilians, Support Security to Dislocated Civilians Camps); Support Famine Prevention and Emergency Food Relief Programs; Support Nonfood Relief Programs; Support Humanitarian Demining; Support Human Rights Initiatives; Support Public Health Programs; Support Education Programs. **Support to Governance:** Support Transitional Administrations; Support Development of Local Governance; Support Anticorruption Initiatives; Support Elections. **Support to Economic and Infrastructure Development:** Support Economic Generation and Enterprise Creation; Support Monetary Institutions and Programs; Support National Treasury Operations; Support Public Sector Investment Programs; Support Private Sector Development; Protect Natural Resources and Environment; Support Agricultural Development Programs; Restore Transportation Infrastructure; Restore Telecommunications Infrastructure; Support General Infrastructure Reconstruction Programs. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-07, Stability Operations, Washington DC, October 2008, p. 3-2—3-19.

within the system becomes distorted by the restrictions that doctrine and structure place on the strategy.”<sup>587</sup> Furthermore, “the Army’s structure is as ageless as its doctrine. Even though the Army leadership acknowledges that the threat environment is changing, it has yet to shift focus toward alternative organizational structures.”<sup>588</sup>

Despite an apparent recognition that operations in Iraq required adapting the institutional mindset and approach to conflict, Wass de Czege argues that this has not necessarily happened: “no one in authority has yet directed changes in doctrine and general practice based on the missions that prevail today. Doctrine still centers on missions with unambiguous and unitary objectives. Such missions involve distinct and hierarchical adversaries and allies within clear contextual boundaries. They present problems one can solve using a linear logic. Most missions from Grenada to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) have required the pursuit of multiple parallel and sequential objectives involving shadowy and non-hierarchical adversaries. They have involved local informal alliances with varied partners within uncertain contextual boundaries that contain problems exhibiting complex, non-linear and interactive causal chains possessing no clear solution.”<sup>589</sup>

Another persistent problem plaguing new doctrine as well as old is an inability to tie adaptive responses to an actual and measurable effect on the adversary or the environment. “Currently, the Army does not have a doctrinal method to evaluate the effectiveness of its actions along a particular line of operation. By using measures of effectiveness as a tool that links the

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<sup>587</sup> Alden, James G., “Eyes Wide Shut: Rigid Doctrine and a Legacy Structure Make the Army Slow to Adapt,” *Armed Forces Journal*, March 2007.

<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>589</sup> Wass de Czege, *Op Cit*, p. 17.

logical lines of operations to the operational objectives and eventually the strategic end state, commanders can develop the measurement technique necessary to evaluate the success of their counterinsurgency operations.”<sup>590</sup> Also, “despite the vast use of the term, the United States Army has not defined measures of effectiveness in its doctrine.”<sup>591</sup> Regardless of the many significant adaptations made by units and the institution as a whole throughout the course of OIF, fully incorporating these changes by establishing MOE and by realigning the planning process to incorporate many separate objectives, although manifestly necessary, will take time. There is no question as to whether elements of the core attributes of the institution will remain intact, they will, and they will likely self-resist future efforts to incorporate adaptations made in Iraq.<sup>592</sup> The question is whether or not the persistence of these core elements will dampen the adaptive architecture borne out of the mismatch and struggle between the legacy and the necessities of the mission in Iraq and likely future operations (discussed in Chapter 8).

Successful unit level adaptations in Iraq not only led to doctrinal changes, however flawed, they also led to fundamental changes in strategy that fully echoed innovation within the theater. The main elements of the 2005 National Strategy for Victory in Iraq (NSVI) reflected progressive tactical adaptations, particularly along the security and economic fronts. The NSVI established three tracks for success in Iraq that mimicked achievements made by tactical units in various pockets of Iraq: Political (Isolate, Engage, Build); Security (Clear, Hold, Build) and;

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<sup>590</sup> Jones, Douglas D., *Understanding Measures of Effectiveness in Counterinsurgency Operations*, School of Advanced Military Studies, Op Cit, p. 24.

<sup>591</sup> Ibid, p. 26.

<sup>592</sup> To be discussed further in Chapter 8.

Economic (Restore, Reform, Build).<sup>593</sup> Critiques of the NSVI highlight the bottom-up character of the strategy. While capturing successful adaptations on the ground and elevating them into a broader strategic platform, the NSVI failed to address larger and important matters that would reinforce the adaptive process by providing the guidance needed to further translate tactical success into the achievement of national goals. The limited nature of the NSVI betrayed its origins: successful unit level adaptations in Iraq. “The NSVI is an improvement over previous planning efforts. However, the NSVI and its supporting documents are incomplete because they do not fully address all the desirable characteristics of an effective national strategy. On one hand, the strategy’s purpose and scope is clear because it identifies U.S. involvement in Iraq as a vital national interest and central front in the war on terror...on the other hand, the strategy falls short in three key areas. First, it only partially identifies the current and future costs of U.S. involvement in Iraq, including the costs of maintaining U.S. military operations, building Iraqi government capacity at the provincial and national level, and rebuilding critical infrastructure. Second, it only partially identifies which U.S. agencies implement key aspects of the strategy or resolve conflicts among the many implementing agencies.”<sup>594</sup> Even the development of the ‘New Way Forward’ in 2007 (Let the Iraqis lead; Help Iraqis protect the population; Isolate extremists; Create space for political progress; Diversity political and economic efforts and;

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<sup>593</sup> National Security Council, “National Strategy for Victory in Iraq,” November 2005, p. 7.

<sup>594</sup> GAO, Rebuilding Iraq: More Comprehensive National Strategy Needed to Help Achieve U.S. Goals, GAO, July 2006, p. 1.

Situate the strategy in a regional approach)<sup>595</sup> did not significantly expand strategy beyond innovations that were made within units and by senior leadership in Iraq.

At the institutional level, the U.S. Army made significant changes to how individuals were educated and how units were trained for operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan. These changes were made by incorporating myriad lessons from and successful adaptations in Iraq and by staffing key training and education centers with veterans of the conflict and with language trained role players. The NTC completely revamped its exercise training to reflect the exigencies of fighting an insurgency and a 60-day training program for advisors was set up at Fort Riley, KS.<sup>596</sup> Other Maneuver Combat Training Centers (MCTCs) adjusted their training by adding villages, urban areas, and Arab and Farsi speakers acting as role players.<sup>597</sup> In addition to training, experience and the development of stores of tacit knowledge further edified a highly educated force:

*“In Iraq, the force is an educated force. It has been educated by 2 or 3 tours.*

*Experience has educated the force in Iraq.”<sup>598</sup>*

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<sup>595</sup> The White House, Fact Sheet: The New Way Forward in Iraq, The White House, 10 January 2007, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/2000110-3.html>.

<sup>596</sup> Vandergriff, Donald E. Raising the Bar: Creating and Nurturing Adaptability to Deal with the Changing Face of War, Op Cit.

<sup>597</sup> Hairgrove, Thomas B., Transitions in Full Spectrum Operations: the Effects of Ethos, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 22 March 2007.

<sup>598</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad C., Personal Interview, 5 November 2008.

By capturing successful adaptations and incorporating them into the force through education, training, doctrine, and experience, iteratively, the U.S. Army created a semi-permanent institutional architecture for integrating the process of adaptation.

Objections to doctrinal and strategic change notwithstanding, adaptation during OIF, particularly at the tactical unit level, proceeded despite a significant historical, doctrinal, and politically supported institutional preference for maintaining and executing only the combat bands of the spectrum of conflict. To wit, “planners structured U.S. forces for the invasion, which was much easier than anticipated, not for the subsequent occupation, which was much harder.”<sup>599</sup> The inappropriateness of the U.S. Army’s structure had two significant but diametrically opposed effects: a reduced capacity for conducting simultaneous full spectrum operations that significantly slowed the adaptive effort and; a concurrent need for an accelerated process of adaptation. The prevalent faith in the panacea of technology and advanced machinery combined with a bizarre belief that combat effectiveness translated into full spectrum effectiveness could not diminish the fact that warfare is a fundamentally human enterprise that is engaged in by competitive and adaptive human beings:

*“Warfare is a human endeavor. Because it involves people, there are enduring qualities about war that will not change. There will always be fog and friction. People get tired and make mistakes. And, you have to fight a living, breathing, thinking human being. So, as he adapts, you adapt.”*<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> Pirnie, Bruce R. and Edward O’Connell, Counterinsurgency in Iraq (2003-2006), RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, p. 47.

<sup>600</sup> Colonel (Ret.) Mansoor, Peter, Telephone Interview, 12 September 2008.

Adaptation in simultaneous full spectrum conflict was recognized for what it was and is: a continuous and cyclical process of modifying inputs and outputs to achieve organizational missions, goals, and objectives in the face of a rapidly changing environment. As Alden argues, “change must not be seen as leading to a particular end-state but as a constant process focused exclusively on the threat environment.”<sup>601</sup>

Secretary of Defense Gates sums up the adaptive struggle the U.S. Army commenced in OIF: “In Iraq, an army that was basically a smaller version of the United States’ Cold War force over time became an effective instrument of counterinsurgency. For every heroic and resourceful innovation by troops and commanders on the battlefield, there was some institutional shortcoming at the Pentagon they had to overcome.”<sup>602</sup> The bottom-up creation of an adaptive architecture will have to be maintained well into the future so to ensure that contrasts between mission, structure, and the ideal organizational form are not so stark as to require such a massive adaptive response. “There have to be institutional changes so that the next set of colonels, captains, and sergeants will not have to be quite so heroic or quite so resourceful.”<sup>603</sup>

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<sup>601</sup> Alden, James G., “Eyes Wide Shut: Rigid Doctrine and a Legacy Structure Make the Army Slow to Adapt,” *Op Cit*.

<sup>602</sup> Gates, Robert M., “A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age,” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 88, Issue 1, Jan/Feb 2009.

<sup>603</sup> *Ibid*.

## 7.0 REACTIVE SEQUENCE: INSURGENT ADAPTATION<sup>604</sup>

*“There are several factors which will determine how much influence the group exercises over the individual through group pressures and norms. One factor is the size of the group. The smaller the group, the more effectively control is exerted over an individual. Other things being equal, the control exercised by the group is in inverse proportion to its size.”<sup>605</sup>*

Modern insurgencies, like the one that formed in Iraq in particular, are decidedly different than their 20<sup>th</sup> Century counterparts in funding, composition, lethality, flexibility, and structure. The Iraqi insurgency (evaluated, at the tactical level, as a general composite of Iraq’s insurgent

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<sup>604</sup> This section details insurgent organization activity in the past tense because the insurgency in Iraq has changed significantly in the last few years. Many of the organizations analyzed in this study no longer exist, have disbanded, have been integrated into the political process or into the counterinsurgency, or have re-formed into other entities because of changes in the conflict and changes in organizational goals. This does not imply that elements of the insurgency no longer exist but instead that the bulk of insurgent activity has dissipated. Accordingly, and although the analysis still obtains, the organizational dimensions analyzed herein should not be documented or read in the present tense.

<sup>605</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies, Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 550-104, September 1966, p. 94. This lesson, learned early in the Vietnam War, is still applicable today. Group size and cohesion, particularly in respect to the control of individuals and the achievement of organizational goals, are inversely related.



networks for this study) was a sizable network composed of some large but many smaller, manifold sub-networks and associated organizations. The insurgency's constituencies were reduced or expanded by organizational goals and these goals were, in turn, truncated or expanded by their constituencies. Such is the duality-laced nature of decentralized networks: they are at once parsimonious and efficient but they lack ultimate coherence; their emergence is ephemeral yet their ties are durable; they have less direct effect than a large, centralized organization but can saturate an environment in simultaneity; they are ubiquitous but unobvious; their strengths are their weaknesses and their weaknesses are their strengths.

Kilcullen argues that the transnational character of modern insurgencies is also new. "Classical-era insurgents copied each other. But each movement operated in its own country, emulation typically happened after the event, and direct cooperation between movements was rare...by contrast, in the field today we see real-time cooperation and cross-pollination between insurgents in many countries."<sup>606</sup> The form of insurgency that emerged in Iraq is unique (but not inimitable) in that it appears to be a blend of three types of insurgent forms identified by Gompert and Gordon:

- Local: self-contained in cause, conduct, scope and usually (although not necessarily) effect. An example is the insurgency in the Philippines (1900);
- Local-International: receives outside support but is fought on a local scale (Vietnam);
- Global-Local: a local insurgency receives international support and becomes part of a wider struggle (International Communism).<sup>607</sup>

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<sup>606</sup> Kilcullen, David, "Counterinsurgency *Redux*," Small Wars Journal, 2006, p. 4.

<sup>607</sup> Gompert, David C. and John Gordon IV, Op Cit, pp. 25-28.

The Iraqi insurgency was at once local (as represented by various Sunni and Shia groups composed mostly of tribes and families indigenous to Iraq and nationalist in character), local-international (received outside support from other organizations and states in the form of funding, tactics, equipment, etc.), and global-local (attracted individuals and support from al Qaeda and like-minded organizations involved in an international jihad-based struggle). The complexity of the Iraqi insurgency and the environment that spawned and hosted this insurgency had no 20<sup>th</sup> Century peer. The difficulties associated with countering the insurgency in Iraq also had no operational peer and cannot be overestimated: “A mutating and ideologically driven global insurgency engendered by a stateless, adaptive, complex, and polycephalous host, moreover, is even more challenging than traditional insurgencies.”<sup>608</sup> The effect of the insurgent struggle was a collapse of the traditional boundaries between the levels of war. Strategy, operations, and tactics were compounded into a confusing quantum amalgam of action and reaction that masked normal operational cues and defied traditional planning and execution boundaries.<sup>609</sup>

Coalition action and inaction in early 2003 (if not the invasion decision itself) helped create the environment for the emergence and expansion of a complex insurgency. A complete and compelled breakdown of the Iraqi state security apparatus enhanced the likelihood and

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<sup>608</sup> Cassidy, Robert M., *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror*, Stanford Security Studies, Stanford, 2008, p. 3.

<sup>609</sup> Harper contends that “In the current operating environment...the strategic level of war has come to dominate the tactical and operational levels as the three...have collapsed into one another.” Harper, David, *Op Cit*, p. 96.

success of any possible and potential insurgency. “When states cannot control their borders or exercise control over isolated parts of the country, insurgents often flourish.”<sup>610</sup> The breakdown of state security also freed for action many informal security providers, like Iraq’s tribes, who were for years after Operation DESERT STORM empowered by Saddam Hussein to provide stability and security in local jurisdictions. As Long argues, “In general, the weaker the state, the more autonomy is given to tribes to provide what the state cannot.”<sup>611</sup> The power of the tribes was inversely related to the power of the state and thus, by default, Iraq’s tribes inherited substantial power and influence after the 2003 invasion and dissolution of Iraq’s security services. When combined with a disaffected population, a cadre of well trained and financed foreign fighters, and substantial organized criminal organizations, Iraq’s tribes helped form an informal security juggernaut that contributed as much to pockets of stability as it did to generalized chaos.

Although the emergence (or reemergence) of Iraq’s tribes, foreign fighters, criminal organizations, and the fusion of insurgent forms and the networked nature of the insurgency in Iraq increased the complexity of the conflict dramatically and complicated counterinsurgent efforts,<sup>612</sup> this complexity also contributed to significant internecine conflict among the

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<sup>610</sup> Byman, Daniel L., et al, Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements, RAND, Santa Monica, 2001, p. 107.

<sup>611</sup> Long, Austin, “The Anbar Awakening,” *Survival*, Volume 50, Number 2, April 2008, p. 70.

<sup>612</sup> For example, “The Sunni part of the insurgency has become the equivalent of a distributed network: a group of affiliated and unaffiliated moves with well-organized cells. It is extremely difficult to attack and defeat because it does not have unitary or cohesive structure or a rigid hierarchy within the larger movements. The larger movements seem to have leadership, planning, financing, and arming cadres kept carefully separate from most operational cells in the field.” Cordesman, Anthony H., *The Iraq War and Lessons for Counterinsurgency*, CSIS, 16

insurgents and a dearth of coherent and unifying strategic goals to direct the insurgency and to compel its acceptance by the Iraqi population. As Kilcullen notes, the Iraqi insurgency did not establish any form of a counter-government.<sup>613</sup> Metz and Millen contend that the Iraqi insurgency had an inchoate ideology, lacked a “positive dimension” and had no clear leadership.<sup>614</sup> According to Paul Smith, the Iraqi insurgency was a tangible and unique agglomeration and manifestation of the darker forces of globalization.<sup>615</sup> “Contemporary insurgencies are less like a traditional war where the combatants seek strategic victory, they are more like a violent, fluid, and competitive market. This circumstance is the result of globalization, the decline of overt state sponsorship of insurgency, the continuing importance of

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March 2006, p. 9. The Department of Defense had (and continues to have) difficulty defining the character and nature of recent insurgencies: “Despite the broader scope, the DOD’s doctrinal definition of insurgency retained traditional assumptions about command and intent, viewing an insurgent organization as operating under the command of an identifiable leadership and moving toward one overarching objective.” See, Wright and Reese, *Op Cit*, p. 99.

<sup>613</sup> Kilcullen, David, “Counterinsurgency *Redux*,” *Small Wars Journal*, 2006, p. 5.

<sup>614</sup> Metz, Steven and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan: Change and Continuity*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2004, pp. 9-10.

<sup>615</sup> Smith argues that the benefits of globalization accrue to criminal and terrorist groups as well. “Like international criminal groups, terrorists have benefited greatly from globalization and its attendant benefits, including mass communications, technology, and advanced financial services (which provide the critical covert financial support for terrorist operations). The vast global arms market—including the ubiquitous black market—provides key weapons for terrorist groups. Porous borders and international migration also play a role in facilitating modern terrorism.” Smith, Paul J., *Op Cit*, p. 83.

informal outside sponsorship, and the nesting of insurgency within complex conflicts associated with state weakness or failure.”<sup>616</sup>

While a divided strategy, absent leadership, and little coordination freed the insurgency and confused the counterinsurgency, these factors also militated against the harmonization of objectives and homogenization of intent needed for disparate groups to adapt towards and achieve organizational goals. Although the issue is not entirely settled, it appears if the prognostication of Eisenstadt and White held true: “The insurgency’s lack of a unified leadership, broad-based institutions, or a clearly articulated vision for Iraq’s future could hinder formation of a unified political-military strategy, further limiting its popular appeal if these shortcomings prevent the attainment of key political and military objectives.”<sup>617</sup> The strengths of an uncoordinated and networked insurgency were also its weaknesses. The insurgency’s objectives were too diffuse for the organization, *in toto*, to effectively adapt: inputs and outputs could not be synchronized to comprehensively achieve adaptation toward organizational goals and missions. As the insurgency divided and as groups defected to the counterinsurgency, organizational adaptation suffered even further.

Distinguishing between the component parts of the insurgency and typifying enduring organizational characteristics and dimensions, temporally, is confounded by the substantial organizational metamorphoses many groups engendered as they pursued organizational goals: small groups appeared and disappeared fleetingly, coalesced, or joined larger groups; large

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<sup>616</sup> Metz, Steven, “New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21<sup>st</sup> Century Insurgency,” *Parameters*, Winter 2007-08, p. 23.

<sup>617</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael and Jeffrey White, “Assessing Iraq’s Sunni Arab Insurgency,” *Policy Focus #50*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, December 2005, p. 33.

groups engaged in fighting, politics, or both depending on shifts in power and influence; some groups resembled criminal cartels as much as guerrilla cadres and; other groups joined the insurgency and then later defected and joined the counterinsurgency when alternative avenues to achieving organizational goals opened and when cooperation with other insurgent groups was no longer palatable. Although some groups appear more political than classically insurgent in hindsight, due in large part to oscillating benignity and careful masquerading, and some even engaged in the political process in the early phases of OIF, it is certain that any benevolent countenance was founded on some history of violence, the threat of violence, the provisioning of unconventional forms of protection, and the distribution of otherwise unavailable goods and services. Each of these inducements and coercions were complementary tools in common use by most major insurgent organizations struggling for power and relevance in post-invasion Iraq and each was wielded at the expense of the control and legitimacy of the Iraqi government. To be clear, by definition<sup>618</sup> any organized group participating or contributing to a politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control, contributed to the Iraqi insurgency. Many organizations were guilty of this charge in the wake of the political and security vacuum created by the 2003 invasion. Although this study does not specifically address the political machinations of larger insurgent groups and almost solely focuses on tactical organizational behavior, it does not deny the salience and fungibility of methods for accruing power and accomplishing organizational objectives. Likewise, this study does not deny the

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<sup>618</sup> Insurgency is defined as: “An organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control.” Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency, 2006.

prominence and influence of larger, better resourced, and popularly supported organizations either directly or tangentially involved in the insurgent struggle. Even when larger organizations were not directly involved in the insurgency either violently, criminally, or politically, they still wielded immeasurable influence, represented vast swaths of the Iraqi population, and enormously complicated the efforts of the Iraqi government and counterinsurgent forces.

Until recently, as the security situation in Iraq improved and as the weight of political power increased, larger organizations and groups engaged in politics and violence interchangeably as part of the insurgency by substituting one for the other or by combining the two in order to achieve organizational goals. But the capacity for wielding direct influence in both politics *and* violence was almost solely the province of larger organizations. Smaller groups, while they could engage in violent and criminal behavior at the tactical level (and on the occasion strategically through the commission of a spectacular event or when attacks were massed athwart geography or at rapid intervals), did not possess the wherewithal, resources, or popular support to seriously engage in the political process or wield significant influence with other insurgent organizations, the Iraqi population, Coalition forces, the CPA, or the Iraqi government. Organizations like JAM and the Badr Brigades explicitly (and deftly) shifted organizational emphasis from violence to politics and back as desired or as organizational requirements dictated.<sup>619</sup> From 2004 through August 2007, JAM engaged in uprisings and fighting in Baghdad, Karbala, Basra, Najaf, and elsewhere. JAM also, variously, cooperated with Sunni groups, had direct relations with and was supported by Iran, operated a shadow

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<sup>619</sup> Many large militias like JAM and the Badr Brigades and other organizations essentially operated as political parties with supporting militias. For discussion, see, Dobbins, James, et al, *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2009.

government, infiltrated the Iraqi police force, and provided security, protection, and resources to its followers, all to benefit the organization and at the expense of the legitimacy of the CPA and the Iraqi government. But JAM also took part in legitimate politicking, the Iraqi national elections, and ran candidates for a variety of other offices. The Badr Brigades (also known as the Badr Division/Corps) maintained an informal security force then enlisted in the INP and ING and participated in national elections. But, like JAM, this group wielded significant political power and engaged in fights against insurgent organizations with or absent the consent of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and later, the Iraqi government. Former Baathist regime elements (FRE), in particular the Fedayeen Saddam and former members of the Iraqi military and intelligence services, were steadfastly nationalist and stood opposed to the CPA and the new Iraqi government. Naturally, the FRE supported and directly contributed to the insurgency with violence but were ultimately interested in regaining political power and influence. Famously, the Sunni Tribes made the transition from being active insurgents aligned with al Qaeda to being a significant part of the counterinsurgency. Each of these groups was further supported by or was aligned with a variety of other large organizations contributing to the insurgent fight against the coalition and the Iraqi government either directly, through violence and criminal enterprise, or more indirectly with tacit support. These organizations included:<sup>620</sup>

- Tandhim al-Qa-ida fi Bilad al-Rafidayn (al Qaeda's organization in Mesopotamia purportedly formed by Zarqawi);
- Jaysh Ansar al-Sunna (Partisans of the Sunna Army);
- Al Jaysh al-Islami fil-'Iraq (the Islamic Army in Iraq);

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<sup>620</sup> International Crisis Group, Op Cit, pp. 1-3.



- Al-Jamga al-Islamiya lil-Muqawama al'Iraqiya (the Islamic Front of the Iraqi Resistance or JAMI).

Other groups included:<sup>621</sup>

- Jaysh al-Rashidin (First Four Caliphs Army);
- Jaysh al-Ta'ifa al-Mansoura (Victorious Group's Army);
- Jaysh al-Mujahidin (Mujahidin's Army);
- Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya fil-'Iraq (Islamic Resistance Movement in Iraq in conjunction with the 1920 Revolution Brigades);
- Jaysh Muhammad (Muhammad's Army).

A final grouping included:<sup>622</sup>

- 'Asa'ib Ahl al'Iraq (Clans of the People of Iraq);
- Saraya Al Ghadhab Al-Islami (Islamic Anger Brigades);
- Saraya Usud Al-Tawhid (Lions of Unification Brigades);
- Saraya Suyuf al-Haqq (Swords of Justice Brigades).

Although these groups (and the people that supported them or were represented by them) modified their behavior and allegiances over time in an attempt to achieve organizational goals, each, by circumstance or by design, and some much more violently than others, contributed to the insurgency by weakening the control and legitimacy of the Iraqi government. The range of

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<sup>621</sup> Ibid.

<sup>622</sup> Ibid.

goals and perceptions for all of the competing and affected groups in Iraq was staggering. The only unifying goal of all of these groups was their desire to effect the removal of coalition forces from Iraq. Beyond that, many groups, even ones sharing common sectarian, religious, and political interests, came into conflict. Parallel or cross-organizational objectives became points of contention within the insurgency, led to intra-organizational competition for resources, and established cleavages that were taken advantage of by the counterinsurgency.<sup>623</sup> Al Qaeda's ambition was not necessarily focused on Iraq but was more regional (even global) and dogmatic: to establish the truth; get rid of evil; establish an Islamic Nation by preparing an Islamic cadre through training and participation in fighting operations and; backing, supporting, and coordinating Jihad movements worldwide.<sup>624</sup> Sunni and Shia groups were by and large focused on provincial and national objectives. Many tribes and families were concerned with provincial and local concerns. By confounding the counterinsurgency to achieve their limited objectives, the insurgents "hoped to make Iraq ungovernable, delay rebuilding of critical infrastructure, and prevent the emergence of democratic government. They calculated quite reasonably that most Iraqis would blame the United States for the abysmal living conditions into which they had sunk. However, in pursuing this strategy, they were the ones denying their own people better times."<sup>625</sup> As one soldier notes:

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<sup>623</sup> Long discusses the complications of the relationship among tribes, the state, and an external power that further confused an already diverse insurgent network. See Long, Austin, "The Anbar Awakening," *Survival*, Volume 50, Number 2, April 2008, p. 72.

<sup>624</sup> Combating Terrorism Center, Harmony Document AFGP-2002-000080, CTC, West Point, New York, 2002.

<sup>625</sup> Mockaitis, Thomas R., "The Iraq War: Learning From the Past, Adapting to the Present, and Planning for the Future," Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 2007, p. 33.

*“Strategically they do a good job with the internet and getting their twisted version of the truth out. However, if all politics are indeed local then what I saw was basically an insurgency that based its hopes on the fear of the people as opposed to real hope for a meaningful future. Handwritten notes with a bullet, decapitation and basic assassination all remained as central to their struggle for control of the people as it did in 2004.”*<sup>626</sup>

Initially, (through 2003) as in the latter stages (late 2007 onwards) of the conflict, the insurgency lacked any clear and unifying organizational objectives.<sup>627</sup> All that American commanders could see and discern were “vague political and religious statements.”<sup>628</sup> The initial phases of the insurgency were not recognized and in fact denied as an insurgency or guerrilla war.<sup>629</sup> Without a clearly articulated and achievable organizational strategy or goal, it is impossible for a centralized and highly controlled organization to adapt inputs and outputs towards a coherent objective. Certainly, this is true for decentralized and networked organizations as well. Both the

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<sup>626</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Crider, James, Email Interview, 22 September 2008.

<sup>627</sup> From 2004 through most of 2007, the many networks in the insurgency were largely united by the common goal of dispensing with counterinsurgency forces, “As the insurgency became larger and more lethal, it also diversified. While the opposition had begun as a loose association of ex-Baathists operating more or less independently, by the spring of 2004, it had become a multifaceted and cohesive network.” Wright and Reese, *Op Cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>629</sup> Hammes, Thomas X., *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Zenith Press, 2006, pp. 173-174.

insurgency and the counterinsurgency suffered from the insurgency's lack of persistent and defined organizational objectives.<sup>630</sup>

A significant result of the insurgency's confused organizational objectives, whether intentional or merely by chance, was the generalized chaos and lawlessness that accompanied a worsening of the security environment. In combination with a weakened state security apparatus, this contributed to increased dissatisfaction among the Iraqi populace, expanded the pool of the insurgency, and diminished the legitimacy of counterinsurgent forces. "Something I think Americans do not focus on, but for many ordinary Iraqis, the central security issue has nothing to do with politics; it has to do with ordinary crime, particularly kidnapping, theft and a general rise in organized crime attendant on the general weakness of the security system and the police."<sup>631</sup> As state authority collapsed and was "being replaced by localism"<sup>632</sup> the insurgency sought a tangential objective to enhance its general viability and to manipulate the

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<sup>630</sup> Arguably, if the insurgency, because of its networked form, would have had a clearer set of strategic goals, it would have realized even more intra-organizational friction and division than it did experience. As Eisenstadt and White argue, "The insurgency's lack of a clearly articulated vision for Iraq's future has prevented potentially profound differences in its ranks from disrupting its activities." Eisenstadt, Michael and Jeffrey White, *Op Cit*, p. 33. This difficulty was realized later in the conflict as different insurgent organizations sought an endgame that brought their contrasting visions into relief and exacerbated already simmering tensions. At least part of the insurgency's strategy was to create chaos but, because this is a negative goal, this did not foment cooperation. McMaster, H. R., Charlie Rose Interview with H. R. McMaster, <http://www.charlierose.com/shows/2008/05/30/1/a-conversation-with-col-h-r-mcmaster>, 2008.

<sup>631</sup> Slocombe, Walter B., Current Operations and the Political Transition in Iraq, Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, 17 March 2005, p. 18.

<sup>632</sup> Larrabe, F. Stephen, *The Middle East: The Changing Strategic Environment*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2006, p. 6.

environment<sup>633</sup> to its favor. “Empowered by the Internet and bad intentions, the creation of mayhem and bad publicity for the Coalition is not a by-product of enemy action but its objective.”<sup>634</sup> This objective allowed the insurgents to essentially control large portions of Iraq’s cities and created the impression that the insurgency was indeed in charge everywhere. “Since cities, particularly capitals, are centers of communication, administration, wealth, and power, they tend to control whole nations. Political control of one major city may be sufficient to establish a convincing claim to control of the country.”<sup>635</sup>

The insurgency’s decentralization, notable lack of coordination, and use of dispersed small-unit attacks sowed confusion within the counterinsurgency: “We’re seeing a cellular organization of six to eight people, armed with RPGs, machine guns, et cetera, attacking us at, sometimes, times and places of their choosing, and other times we attack them at times and places of our choosing. They are receiving financial help from probably regional-level leaders. And I think describing it as guerrilla tactics being employed against us is, you know, a proper thing to describe in strictly military terms.”<sup>636</sup> Initially, the counterinsurgency believed that the insurgents were being led or directed by FREs in a military style campaign. Correspondingly,

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<sup>633</sup> Kostakos and Kostakos argue that criminal and terrorist organizations a balance with their external environment by influencing this environment. See, Kostakos, Panos and Vassillis Kostakos, *Criminal Group Behavior and Operational Environments*, ECPR Standing Group on Organized Crime Newsletter, Volume 5, Issue 2, May 2006, p. 6.

<sup>634</sup> Collins, Joseph J., “The Perils of Planning: Lessons from Afghanistan and Iraq,” *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles*, Eds. Joseph R. Cerami and Jay W. Boggs, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, December 2007, p. 104.

<sup>635</sup> Defense Research Corporation, “Urban Insurgency Cases,” Santa Barbara, CA, 14 March 1968, p. 8.

<sup>636</sup> Abizaid, John, Situation Report, NewsHour with Jim Lehrer Transcript, 16 July 2003.

the tactics employed by the counterinsurgency did not indicate an appreciation of the complexity of the insurgency it faced. Although the capture and execution and killing of Saddam Hussein and his sons, respectively, might have been perceived as the beginning of the end but it was really the end of the beginning. Upon the Husseins' deaths, the United States government could no longer sensibly claim that resistance was being directed by the former regime members or other associated dead-enders. In corollary, the insurgency could no longer be accused of supporting the former regime.<sup>637</sup> In hindsight, these deaths should have cured the United States of its illusions regarding the insurgency. Furthermore, "Having shattered the unifying state structure of Iraq, it was perhaps unsurprising that coalition forces should face a number of very different enemies with diverse aims, aspirations, and tactics."<sup>638</sup>

As stated at the beginning of the previous chapter, an ideal organizational form is perfectly suited to accomplishing organizational goals and missions in any environment and against any competitor. The ideal organization is also perfectly situated to take advantage of any opportunities presented by changing environmental stimuli or organizational defects (in training, execution, learning, etc.) revealed by a competitor. But each degree that an organization is separated from the ideal type necessitates adaptation for the achievement of organizational goals and missions: an adjustment of inputs, outputs, or both. Because an organization is unlikely to be ideal for any given environment or against any particular competitor it must therefore maintain a capacity for adaptation if it is to remain a going concern.

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<sup>637</sup> Cockburn, Patrick, *The Occupation: War and Resistance in Iraq*, Verso, New York, 2007, p. 105.

<sup>638</sup> Finlan, Alstair, "Trapped in the Dead Ground: US Counter-Insurgency Strategy in Iraq," *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Volume 16, Number 1, 2005, p. 10.

For the Iraqi insurgency, rapid adaptation occurred across the organization but was tied to the organizational goals of disparate participating groups. Without an overarching trans-organizational objective, the insurgency strayed far away from the ideal organizational form and could not coherently adapt inputs and outputs in concert. A lack of coordination gave the insurgency its strength when combating and competing against the counterinsurgency but also proved to be a great weakness. If sowing chaos and disrupting the realization of counterinsurgent objectives was its only goal, the insurgency in Iraq would have neared an ideal organizational form. But, these were not the only objectives of the insurgency. Even the unifying ambition of ridding Iraq of Coalition forces could not temper other competing organizational goals. As a result, the insurgency could not adapt inputs and outputs articulately and the network failed to achieve enduring organizational success.

This chapter will examine the input and output components that comprised the insurgency's adaptive process and will outline modifications made throughout the course of the conflict in Iraq. Factors inhibiting and enabling organizational adaptation will be highlighted and used to demonstrate how tactical-level organizational adaptation occurred but failed to translate into overall organizational success.

## **7.1 ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT**

### **7.1.1 Goals and rewards**

Depending on their role in the insurgency, each participant and sub-organization had different goals and sought different rewards. Each set of goals and rewards initially fueled and later

undermined the insurgency as it first waxed and then waned in power. Elements of the insurgency were variously motivated to take anti-Coalition actions early on while later they supported anti-insurgent operations. Some Iraqis were involved in the insurgency (and afterward the counterinsurgency) out of basic economic necessity<sup>639</sup> while others joined in order to “prevent the establishment of a state dominated by Shiites and secular Kurds.”<sup>640</sup> Some insurgent groups were criminal-commercial in nature and others were ideologically driven. As a result of these various motivations, the reward system was different for each group: nationalist pride; ideological, spiritual, and religious recompense and; money were all fundamental yet distinct motivators.

Regardless of the rewards sought, the principal unifying goal (indeed their strength)<sup>641</sup> of most if not all individual insurgents and insurgent groups was driving Coalition forces from Iraq. In fact, the insurgency’s manifold organizations held few principal goals in common other than a desire to remove U.S. and Coalition forces from the country—until late in the conflict, little thought was given to the likely aftermath of a successful insurgency. Initial goals were more nihilistic than positive and included ensuring that the Iraqi government could not function.<sup>642</sup> Generally, the insurgency in Iraq sought to “create a crisis between the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people in the hopes that outside support for the government will wane, forcing the

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<sup>639</sup> Paley, Amit R., “Iraqis Joining Insurgency Less for Cause than Cash,” Washington Post Foreign Service, 20 November 2007.

<sup>640</sup> Steinberg, Guido, *The Iraqi Insurgency: Actors, Strategies, and Structures*, SWP Research Paper, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, December 2006, p. 14.

<sup>641</sup> Hammes, Thomas X., *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Zenith Press, pp. 183-184.

<sup>642</sup> Hammes, Thomas X., “Countering Evolved Insurgent Networks,” *Military Review*, July-August 2006.



withdrawal of foreign forces.”<sup>643</sup> The underlying differences in goals and rewards systems and the strange bedfellows that the confluence of these systems engendered made the insurgency magnificently complex but also contributed to its eventual loss of influence and subsequent operational collapse.

As an organizational goal, creating a crisis instead of a political road-map or alternative form of governance not only required little support from the people of Iraq but also demanded little if any real coordination among various insurgent organizations.<sup>644</sup> Creating chaos demands very little planning. Indeed, the less planning and coordination conducted, the more likely the appearance or manifestation of turmoil and pervasion of anarchy. Lacking a positive or value-added agenda freed the insurgency to conduct activities that were anything but productive or beneficial to the future of Iraq, its governance, or its citizens: “insurgent actions are destructive and psychological, while those of the government are basically constructive and administrative.

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<sup>643</sup> Rabasa, Angel, et al, *Beyond al-Qaeda Part 2: The Outer Rings of the Terrorist Universe*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006, p. 52.

<sup>644</sup> Hoffman, Frank G., “Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?,” *Parameters*, Summer 2007, p. 81. Andrade argues that the insurgency in Iraq distinguished itself from previous insurgent templates, “In Iraq, the situation is different in that the guerrillas have not made a concerted effort to mobilize the people. A large part of the Sunni population seems to support the insurgency, but the guerrillas are not forming local shadow governments or attempting to establish their own political and economic programs.” Andrade, Dale, “Three Lessons from Vietnam,” *Washington Post*, 29 December 2005. Additionally, “Almost none [of the insurgent groups] have articulated a vision of a free post-U.S. Iraq. The insurgency is not a monolithic or united movement directed by a leadership with a unitary and disciplined ideological vision.” Hashim, Ahmed, “Terrorism and Complex Warfare in Iraq,” *Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor*, Volume II, Issue 12, June 2004, p. 2. This can be partly explained by some popular motivations based on regional and religious factors not wholly related to governance.

The insurgent does not have to administer conventional government, while the government's main concern is more effective government.”<sup>645</sup> Although creating a crisis might have been an explicit or intentional goal of al Qaeda, affiliated groups, and for organized criminals, it likely was only a secondary or tertiary effect of other groups' operations as they tried to achieve more limited and tangible objectives. For instance, while insurgent organizations disrupted communications, services, transportation, and energy distribution at will to create chaos for the population and the counterinsurgency,<sup>646</sup> this also set the conditions for rampant criminal activities submerged and hidden beneath waves of disorder. Coincidentally, criminal activities created even more chaos and thus multiplied the effect of the initial insurgent action. Although insurgents worked to achieve operational goals in a premeditated fashion,<sup>647</sup> the effect of achieving these goals created a convenient environment for various ideological and criminal enterprisers and the architecture for an alternative reward system consisting of power, influence, and money.

Crime rose dramatically after the 2003 invasion. As the conflict became an insurgent/counterinsurgent struggle and as Iraq was brimming with chaos, the rewards accruing to criminals increased dramatically. Criminals, organized and otherwise, were able to take advantage of chaotic conditions as the country began to rebuild itself and as foreign and Coalition money poured into governmental and business coffers through governmental aid and

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<sup>645</sup> Darling, Roger, “A New Conceptual Scheme for Analyzing Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review*, February 1974, pp. 57-58.

<sup>646</sup> Hoffman, Frank G., “Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?,” *Parameters*, Summer 2007, p. 83.

<sup>647</sup> Mansoor, Peter R. and Mark S. Ulrich, “Linking Doctrine to Action: A New COIN Center-of-Gravity Analysis,” *Military Review*, September-October, 2007, p. 48.

contracts. Criminals contributed to and fed off of the insurgency even though their objectives and motivations were significantly different than those of the definitional insurgent. “According to American estimates, some 80% of all violent attacks in the country have crime as their underlying motive...While this is likely too high an estimate, it highlights the fact that parties involved in a civil war or conflicts resembling civil wars often resort to criminal activity as a source of money.”<sup>648</sup> Even if these numbers are halved, criminal organizations in Iraq created substantial instability, sowed fear and loathing into the Iraqi population, and exacerbated the effect of the ideologically and politically motivated arms of the insurgency. The reward for their activities was money, the settling of scores against competitors, and the expansion of an illicit market that they largely controlled through legitimate and illegitimate ‘commercial’ activities. Commercial insurgents, part of the overall criminal enterprise system in Iraq, aimed “for little more than to acquire material resources through the seizure and control of political power.”<sup>649</sup> Politically enabled street crime, devoid of any ideological or organizational restrictions and accelerated by a ubiquitous insurgency, generated rewards that furthered the ambitions of the criminally motivated elements of the insurgency.

Crime also supplemented or supplanted normal economic activity that was seriously disrupted by the invasion and the breakdown of state security.<sup>650</sup> Criminal activity fused with insurgent activity as the funds from the former were used to pay for the actions of the latter. Initially, foreign and local insurgent organizations that hired out or contracted for attacks on the

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<sup>648</sup> Steinberg, Guido, *Op Cit*, p. 25.

<sup>649</sup> Todd, Lin, *Iraq Tribal Study—Al-Anbar Governorate*, Global Resources Group, 18 June 2006, p. 6-5.

<sup>650</sup> “Unemployment skyrocketed after the invasion, reaching 67 percent, due in large measure to deliberate U.S. policy.” Mockaitis, Thomas R., *Op Cit*, p. 39.

coalition were paid very little. Simple assaults on Coalition convoys, sniper attacks on outposts, and mortar attacks received scant financial reward. Although initial payments were relatively small, as the insurgency grew in strength and sophistication (and as insurgent work became more dangerous and complex), remuneration for insurgent work increased significantly. Insurgents could expect to receive between “\$500 and \$2,000 for each operation undertaken—between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for downed helicopters or airplanes.”<sup>651</sup> Lacquer argues that “There is a negative correlation between guerrilla warfare and the degree of economic development.”<sup>652</sup> Rampant unemployment, negative economic development, and a scarcity of hard currency helped link crime, the insurgency, and the local population in pursuit of their goals, however divergent.

Unlike the affected population and criminal groups, AQI and AQI affiliated organizations had manifold goals almost exclusively regional or internationalist in character: to contextualize local conflicts as part of a broader struggle against ‘apostasy’ and ‘the infidel’;<sup>653</sup> to establish a pan-Islamic Caliphate;<sup>654</sup> to overthrow ‘non-Islamic’ regimes; to expel Westerners from Muslim countries; to compel U.S. force withdrawal from bases in the Middle East, to build a following

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<sup>651</sup> Novikov, Gene, “Unmasks the Iraqi Insurgency,” Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor, Volume II, Issue 12, 17 June 2004, p. 6.

<sup>652</sup> Lacquer, Walter, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical & Critical Case Study*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1998, p. 395.

<sup>653</sup> Rabasa, Angel, et al, *Beyond al-Qaeda Part 1: The Global Jihadist Movement*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006, p. xvii.

<sup>654</sup> Rosenau, William, *Waging the ‘War of Ideas,’* RAND, Santa Monica, 2006, p. 1136.

based on action not strategy and; to bring about the complete collapse of the Iraqi state.<sup>655</sup> For the extreme arm of a relatively extremist al Qaeda, represented by the Abu Musab al Zarkawi network, Iraq was treated merely as a potential base for supporting al Qaeda's operations abroad.<sup>656</sup> Zarkawi specifically sought to divide Sunni and Shi'a by first igniting a civil war in Iraq that could be exported to the greater Middle East and eventually to the entire Muslim world.<sup>657</sup> Al Qaeda's methods in securing these various goals distinguished them from their more nationalist allies: "While the national Islamists are essentially fighting a classic guerrilla war with only a few isolated acts of terror to their name, the Jihadists use terrorist attacks to specifically try to provoke a sectarian civil war."<sup>658</sup> Eventually, AQI's ideology and internationalist goals, which were largely inseparable and reflected an almost complete disregard for the Iraqi population and Iraqi elements of the insurgency, led to the disentanglement of pan-insurgent goals and an operational schism that precipitated the decline of the insurgency.

Cooperation among various insurgent groups was critical for realizing the insurgency's one unifying goal: the removal of Coalition forces from Iraq. The Sunni elements of the insurgency, by far the largest component of this force, were critical to achieving this goal. For their part, the Sunni insurgency was principally concerned with securing a greater role for the

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<sup>655</sup> See, Jenkins, Brian Michael, "The Jihadists Operational Code," Three Years After: Next Steps in the War on Terror, Ed. David Aaron, RAND, Santa Monica, 2005, p. 4, Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit, p. 15, and Krepinevich, Andrew, The War in Iraq: The Nature of Insurgency Warfare, CBSA, 2 June 2004, p. 2.

<sup>656</sup> Vandergriff, Donald E., Raising the Bar: Creating and Nurturing Adaptability to Deal with the Changing Face of War, Center for Defense Information, Washington DC, 2006.

<sup>657</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 182.

<sup>658</sup> Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit.

Sunni population in the postwar Iraqi political order. This could be accomplished either by banding with the other insurgent organizations to compel a withdrawal of Coalition forces (who set and enforced the conditions for a Shi'a majority in the new Iraqi government) or by working with Coalition and government forces directly. Initially, the Sunni insurgency opted to cooperate with AQI and other like minded insurgent groups to force withdrawal. But by mid-2004, significant political divisions emerged splintering the insurgency between legal Sunni groups (working through political channels) and Sunni insurgent groups (directly fighting against the counterinsurgency). Both of these Sunni groups were further divided from the likeminded Ba'thist, nationalist, tribal, and foreign organizations. Partitions abounded and allegiances changed over time in Iraq. "Whilst sectarian self-identifications have had some salience in the past, other forms of self-description have often been as strong if not more so: the tribe, clan, city quarter, guild, class, nation-state and transborder ethnonationalist groupings have all been strong claimants on loyalty in the past...none of these factors is immutable."<sup>659</sup> Accordingly, divisions erupted over differing agendas, modus operandi, and long-term organizational goals.<sup>660</sup> As Steinberg argues, "The insurgents agree on who and what they are fighting against, but they don't always concur on what they are fighting for. They are primarily concerned with securing a

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<sup>659</sup> Herring, Eric and Glen Rangwala, *Iraq in Fragments: The Occupation and its Legacy*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 148. Herring and Rangwala discuss, at length, divisions and alliances in Iraq prior to and during the occupation.

<sup>660</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 208.

greater role for the Sunni population in a new political order for Iraq, notwithstanding the lack of clarity about what that order would look like.”<sup>661</sup>

Discord among insurgent factions only deepened further as foreign elements of the insurgency (particularly AQI) became ever more radical as the conflict progressed. Al Qaeda’s savagery and the realization that AQI was as much an occupying force as the Coalition exacerbated the insurgent rift.<sup>662</sup> Recognizing an opportunity to achieve organizational political and social goals by shifting allegiances, the Sunni insurgency turned on their former insurgent allies. The 40 or so tribal chieftains that led the Sunni rebellion against the insurgency (calling themselves the Anbar Awakening) did so for two principal reasons: monetary, material, political, and physical support from the Coalition and; al Qaeda’s “growing encroachment on their traditional pursuits of banditry and smuggling.”<sup>663</sup> In 2008, “nearly 100,000 Iraqis, many of them former insurgents” were on the American payroll.<sup>664</sup> Former Sunni insurgents work at police stations and labor as ‘loosely supervised gunmen’ supporting the Awakening Councils in Sunni dominated tribal areas.<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>661</sup> Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit, p. 14.

<sup>662</sup> Jones, James L., The Report of the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq, Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq, 6 September 2007, p. 127. Part of this savagery included indiscriminate murder, extremist tactics, and suicide bombings leading to the death of thousands of Iraqi civilians. See Burns, John F. and Alissa J. Rubin, “U.S. Arming Sunnis in Iraq to Battle Old Qaeda Allies,” New York Times Late Edition, 11 June 2007.

<sup>663</sup> Blanche, Ed, “Splintering Iraq’s Insurgency,” The Middle East, June 2007.

<sup>664</sup> Filkins, Dexter, “U.S. Hands Back a Quieter Anbar,” New York Times, 2 September 2008.

<sup>665</sup> Ibid.

The ability to achieve organizational goals and rewards varied inversely as the insurgency's strength ebbed and flowed. Byman argues that "It is particularly important to recognize the many dimensions of a successful insurgency. Most analyses focus on size, resources, and outside support, and some also address the issue of popularity of the insurgents' cause. Equally important, and at times, more so, are issues regarding identity and group competition: the political identity that is most salient for the group among the myriad challengers that will prevail is not preordained."<sup>666</sup> The competition among groups for resources, rewards, and for the achievement of organizational goals does not preordain allegiance either. When economic, political, and nationalist fortunes shifted all that remained were the ideological goals of foreign fighters and some of their local supporters; the glue holding these organizations together dissolved. Competition for the achievement of organizational goals rather quickly replaced solidarity in the reward structure of the insurgency.

### **7.1.2 Information**

Controlling the information environment during a complex insurgency is of paramount importance to competing organizations. This is particularly true for organizations that operate tactically but have strategic ambitions. Information not only instructs and educates it also shapes perceptions. Most importantly for a networked organization, effective information gathering and dissemination creates the appearance of solidarity, expands the influence of the organization, advertises the organization's activities, and helps improve internal organizational processes. The

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<sup>666</sup> Byman, Daniel, *Understanding Proto-Insurgencies*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 30.



insurgency in Iraq effectively used information to portray itself strategically, to coordinate operations, and to influence audiences that could either inhibit or augment tactical actions.

Influencing and at times controlling the information environment in Iraq required committed resources. Many of the larger insurgent organizations “established dedicated information offices which in essence function as ‘online press agencies’ issuing communiqués, developing and posting new content for their websites (often several times a day) and generally updating and regularly replenishing news and other features.”<sup>667</sup> The information or propaganda that these offices generated could be used to strengthen resolve among dedicated organization members, influence potential constituents or the public, and internally to “enhance cohesion and morale.”<sup>668</sup> The insurgency also used information and propaganda to challenge the counterinsurgent agenda. “A large number of insurgent and terrorist groups in Iraq proved to be adept at using all types of media to further their cause and to discredit the Coalition and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).”<sup>669</sup>

For the insurgency, the spoken word was perhaps the most important method of channeling information. The oral transference of information was for all intents and purposes undetectable and almost impossible to interdict by the counterinsurgency. And, it was incredibly effective for transmitting information through a population that had literacy rates lower than 60

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<sup>667</sup> Hoffman, Bruce, “The Use of the Internet by Islamic Extremists,” Testimony Presented to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, 4 May 2006, P. 14.

<sup>668</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>669</sup> Wright, Donald P. and Timothy R. Reese, Op Cit, p. 104.

percent overall and even lower in rural areas.<sup>670</sup> The fact that Iraq's official language is Arabic enabled AQI and other associated foreign and indigenous insurgent groups to communicate in a language unfamiliar to the counterinsurgency but almost entirely familiar to the local population.<sup>671</sup>

To reach broader populations and audiences and to enhance coordination among the insurgency, information technology (IT) was used in low cost and innovative ways. To attract supporters, "videos of exploding U.S. vehicles and dead Americans" were distributed via the internet.<sup>672</sup> The insurgency used the internet "to provide would-be recruits with directions on how to make their way into Iraq via Syria. For example, two websites, Jihadweb and Al-Firdaws, have presented detailed instructions."<sup>673</sup> IT was also used to build a command, control, and information structure that usually does not exist in a networked or non-hierarchical

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<sup>670</sup> "Iraq's adult literacy rate is now one of the lowest in all Arab countries; UNESCO estimates literacy rates to be less than 60 percent, or 6 million illiterate Iraqi adults. Rural residents and women have been hit hardest; only 37 percent of rural women can read, and 30 percent of Iraqi girls of high school age are enrolled in school compared with 42 percent of boys." USAID, "Assistance for Iraq," accessed 19 October 2009, available at <http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/education.html>.

<sup>671</sup> Although Arabic is Iraq's official language, Kurdish is widely used in the Kurdish regions of Northern Iraq. Al Qaeda recognized this fact early on, "We believe that jihad in Iraq will be easier for Al-Qaida than in Afghanistan in view of the factor of language, which was an obstacle in Afghanistan, and the factor of the people's similar features." Al-Siba'l, Hani, "Terrorism: Jihadist Website Describes Jihadist Movements in Iraq," FBIS Report in Arabic 14 March 2004.

<sup>672</sup> Wilson, Clay, *Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Iraq and Afghanistan: Effects and Countermeasures*, CRS Report for Congress, 25 September 2006, p. 2.

<sup>673</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 167.

organization: “The structure of terrorist and insurgent groups facilitate this transfer of information amongst themselves. Lacking the traditional bureaucracy of modern militaries, information flows rapidly and efficiently between participating subunits. Indeed, Al Qaeda’s organization has gone virtual as many of their former activities are conducted solely on line: spreading propaganda, recruiting new Jihadists, fundraising, indoctrination and psychological warfare. They even have the ability to fabricate and disseminate their own professionally produced and mass marketed CD-Roms and DVDs.”<sup>674</sup> Information was gathered at the tactical level and broadcast for strategic purposes.<sup>675</sup> The insurgency was flush with technically adept individuals that established and maintained elaborate websites used for broadcasting propaganda against Coalition forces and their efforts.<sup>676</sup> “Insurgents often had a cameraman at the site of a car bombing, and within minutes of the explosion, the images appeared on the Internet without having to be vetted in any approval process and with little regard to for the distinction between news and propaganda.”<sup>677</sup>

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<sup>674</sup> Methods for sharing information that took advantage of the networked structure of terrorist organizations was imported into Iraq principally by Al Qaeda and was adopted by other organizations participating in the insurgency. See, Karzai, Hekmat and Paul T. Mitchell, Networked Power: Insurgents Versus ‘Big Army’, IDSS Commentaries, 27 January 2006, p. 2

<sup>675</sup> See, U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, Violent Islamist Extremism, the Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorist Threat, Majority and Minority Staff Report, 9 May 2008, pp. 7-10.

<sup>676</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 167.

<sup>677</sup> Wright, Donald P. and Timothy R. Reese, *Op Cit*, p. 288.

Insurgent use of IT and the internet for strategic purposes did not always achieve the insurgents' desired intent and many times had consequences far beyond the control of insurgent factions. For instance, operational videos, plans, and guidebooks, when captured, proved a treasure trove to counterinsurgent analysts. Additionally, hostage videos and hostage beheading videos broadcast to cause fear and rally support for the insurgency among sympathetic audiences often created revulsion and horrified viewers who had little previous exposure to the actions of the insurgency beyond what they read in newspapers, magazines, or on the internet. Strategically, videos capturing the slaughter of Iraqi civilians and the beheading of foreign contractors and military personnel demonstrated the savagery of the more radical elements of the insurgency and allowed foreign politicians and military leaders to engender greater resolve by painting the entire insurgency with one large brush. These videos created graphic images that negatively supplemented and informed international audiences' impressions of the insurgents' struggle.

Perhaps most vexing for the U.S. Army and other counterinsurgent forces was the insurgency's ability to use low-level and ubiquitous technologies to supplement and coordinate mass social networks among the Iraqi population:

*"We were in an area that was very rural and poor. They didn't have any money, food and water was scarce, and yet they had what would be the equivalent of the iPhone here. They were taking video and calling from one shepherd to the next to let each other know that we just came by a position. I was surprised that*

*when we found a cell phone and you looked at it, they had better video than you or I have on our phones.”*<sup>678</sup>

This was also done within branches of the government, “Many terrorist groups maintain networks of individuals to feed information back into the organization. These groups frequently develop sources within the government and security agencies that oppose them, either by infiltrating them or by recruiting operatives who are already members of those agencies.”<sup>679</sup>

The creation of feedback loops provided insurgent organizations with critical operational information, facilitated organizational control over operations, and enabled directed clandestine and overt information gathering to be used against the Coalition or for internal purposes. Insurgent control and/or influence over the information environment was abetted by IT but relied mostly on unsophisticated networks consisting of personal contacts, well placed sources, and the ability to gather and spread information at low cost. Facility with information flows and largely unfettered access to information gathering and dissemination technologies allowed the insurgency to adapt at the tactical and strategic levels rapidly and simultaneously and further improved the capacity for training, intelligence operations, and inter-organizational cooperation.

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<sup>678</sup> Soldier deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

<sup>679</sup> Jackson, Brian A., et al, Op Cit, p. 22.

### 7.1.3 Training

Initially, the level of training and tactical acumen within and across the insurgency varied wildly. Former Iraqi military, police, and intelligence operators and the quasi-professional elements of foreign groups had experience and diverse levels of combat, paramilitary, or terrorist tactics training. Many members of the general population, the tribes, and even some of the militias had some degree of familiarity with small arms and other light weapons but little if any real training on their use in an operational sense or in coordination with other weapons and operators:

*“We have smart, tough, adaptable enemies. But they are not supermen. They are generally poor shots, lack meaningful combat training, and work in atomized, ill-coordinated cells and teams.”<sup>680</sup>*

Although Iraq would turn into a large, experiential training ground for thousands of insurgents and terrorists, coordinated training never reached a level of standardization, even with the help of outside agencies and state-sponsored groups that allowed the insurgency to be completely tactically effective and entirely coordinated during operations. But this was not all bad. While standardization would have enabled greater efficiency across the insurgency and a streamlining of organizational input and output modifications, standardization would have also created some level of replication and predictability, a sure danger to an insurgent force.

Instead of becoming predictable and following a standardized template, the insurgency, by trying to achieve tactical effectiveness, became unpredictable. Some insurgent organizations

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<sup>680</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, Email Interview, 13 September 2008.

displayed evolved competency and were capable of mounting complex baited ambushes incorporating a wide variety of tactics and weapons in well timed and sequenced attacks. Other insurgent organizations mounted haphazard and unintentionally (and on occasion, intentionally) suicidal mass attacks on Coalition forces with disastrous results. The net effect of variable competence and tactical inefficiency was a significant, continual, and uneven adaptation across the insurgency that kept the U.S. Army almost perpetually off balance. Unpredictability and heterogeneous capabilities were as much unintentional strengths as they were structural weaknesses. Failure invited change as much as success summoned replication: both taught valuable lessons and both engendered confusion among counterinsurgent forces.

Training an insurgent is not a high cost or laborious endeavor. Technically, most insurgent attacks are fairly simple to rehearse and execute and the weapons used do not require a great degree of knowledge or sophistication to employ. Insurgent attacks in Iraq, which reflect imported knowledge gleaned from planning and executing terrorist and standardized military operations, are crude when compared to the complex operations conducted by modern militaries. Even the feared and deadly and multiform IED attack is relatively simple to construct and employ. “Most terrorist acts are committed with fire, a knife, dynamite or other explosives, or with personal automatic weapons. The majority of these are at the ‘low-tech’ levels. The change in this respect, and a strong recent concern, is increasing sophistication with remote detonation methods. These are disturbingly easy to arrange and can give new life to a deadly old standard, the vehicle bomb.”<sup>681</sup> Another favorite tactic of the insurgency was the suicide attack, which

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<sup>681</sup> Harmon, Christopher C., “What History Suggests about Terrorism and its Future,” *The Past as Prologue: The Importance of History to the Military Profession*, Eds. Murray, Williamson and Richard Hart Sinnreich, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, p. 241.

was nearly as deadly as the IED and even more difficult to detect and defend against. “Suicide bombings are cost effective, have a small logistical tail, do not require strenuous training and are not easy to combat.”<sup>682</sup> Suicide attacks were largely the province of foreign fighters and mostly relied on recruits with few discernable skills to contribute to the insurgency.<sup>683</sup>

Although initially insurgent groups were disorganized and had limited aims and little need for specialization, “This situation began to change in 2004, most likely because of the growing role of former military personnel in providing training, specialized skills and manpower to insurgent groups.”<sup>684</sup> Instilling basic combat knowledge throughout the insurgency enabled individuals and organizations to be much more adaptive. Since the insurgency only rarely employed truly complex attacks with a large number of forces and weapons systems, simple training sufficed for operational effectiveness and for instilling enough baseline knowledge to allow for group level adaptation. “A terrorist group has much to gain by building or acquiring new operational capabilities and tactics. The more tactics a group has in its repertoire—from bombings to firearms attacks to kidnappings to unconventional weapons—the greater its flexibility and operations freedom.”<sup>685</sup>

To supplement higher order planning and attacks, insurgent organizations looked to published military manuals and successful innovations by other insurgent groups for knowledge

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<sup>682</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S. *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 181.

<sup>683</sup> This changed (and is discussed later) when Al Qaeda enlisted Iraqi women to conduct martyrdom/revenge missions in response to male relatives killed during the conflict.

<sup>684</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>685</sup> Jackson, Brian A., et al, *Op Cit*, p. 18.



and inspiration. Insurgents had access to volumes of army training manuals (foreign and domestic) and terrorist handbooks and actively sought lessons from other insurgent groups (i.e., Hezbollah and Palestinian organizations) contributing resources to the conflict in Iraq.<sup>686</sup> Foreign fighters also provided manuals and training expertise in the form of encyclopedic collections produced by al Qaeda: “Basic training materials are contained in Al-Qaeda’s 7,000-page multi-volume, *Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad*, a collection of techniques culled from American and British special force’s manuals combined with lessons learned from jihadist operations in Kashmir, Bosnia, Mindanao and Chechnya. These teaching materials are supplemented with other specialty training manuals, for example, the *Declaration of Jihad against the Country’s Tyrants, Military Series*, with lessons ranging from communication, transportation of weapons and their procurement, is used exclusively for advanced terrorist training.”<sup>687</sup> Training freed from bureaucratic controls and the exactitude necessitated by organizational standards could proceed at any level and draw from any source in its conduct.

The insurgency also took advantage of experts and skilled trainers when possible. Professional training is directly related to an organization’s ability to freely meet and move about in its local environment. To be fully effective, training of this sort requires its participants to actually engage in the behavior that they are being taught.<sup>688</sup> Training sessions were held when

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<sup>686</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 163.

<sup>687</sup> Hanratty, Martin E., *Can the United States Defeat Radical Islam?*, School of Advanced Military Studies U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 22 May 2008, p. 22.

<sup>688</sup> Much of the training that insurgents and insurgent organizations received, particularly contracted individuals and localized organizations, occurred on the job.

the group was together and incorporated lessons from each member's experiences and were conducted by veteran members of the organization.<sup>689</sup> Generally, this rarely occurred in areas outside of direct insurgent control and was highly circumscribed even in areas where the insurgency held sway. Large and open or even clandestine gatherings were discouraged to protect the operational security of the organization or group and the safety of its members. Thus, the most advanced and time consuming insurgent training came from experienced internal and external groups and state-sponsored organizations capable of minimizing training horizons and collapsing important lessons into a shortened but intense regimen.<sup>690</sup> Expert cadres developed spontaneously or were sought out much like the Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) used by U.S. forces.

In at least one case, a state (Iran) directly, if mostly covertly, contributed to the training of the insurgency. Iranian sponsored training occurred inside Iran and in areas where Iranian-backed militants were in power (chiefly in Lebanon). "Iraqi militants captured by the United States describe a complex Iranian program equipped to illicitly move, train, and arm Iraqis. Classes range from basic weapons courses and paramilitary training to courses designed to create

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<sup>689</sup> Chehab, Zaki, *Inside the Resistance: The Iraqi Insurgency and the Future of the Middle East*, Nation Books, 2006.

<sup>690</sup> Advanced professional training (recruits went through a 15 day boot camp to test physical and psychological commitment to al Qaeda; a 45 day period of basic military training consisting of map reading, trenching, celestial navigation, and weapons training and if selected; a 45 day guerrilla warfare school that trained hijacking, espionage, and assassination) used to occur at al Qaeda training bases in Afghanistan until these bases were destroyed or significantly compromised by the 2001 U.S.-led invasion. As a result, "training has become local and less professional" in Afghanistan. See, Hanratty, Martin E., *Op Cit*, pp. 22-23. The same conditions prevailed in Iraq; open training camps do not exist or do not exist for long in one location.

Iraqi master-trainers that can continue military education and training inside Iraq. Iran employs Lebanese Hizballah agents as trainers inside Iran and sponsors Iraqi militants' travel to train Hizballah in Lebanon."<sup>691</sup> Iran used the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Qods Force to train Iraqi militants within the sanctuary of Iranian borders.<sup>692</sup> The professional training and material support provided by Iran was exported to Iraq via a trained cadre of insurgents and in the form of infiltrated experts hidden among the supportive populations. "Iran has imported numerous Lebanese Hezbollah trainers and advisors into Iraq; the Iranian Qods Force directly oversees Iranian efforts in Iraq, and cell leaders in Iraq, including Iraqis and Lebanese Hezbollah operatives, report directly and indirectly to Qods Force commanders in Tehran; Iran supports Ansar al Sunnah, a Sunni terrorist group with close links to al Qaeda, with training camps inside Iran and further assists the group with operations in Iraq."<sup>693</sup>

The insurgency adapted to circumstance by conducting discrete training supported by multiple hosts, suffusing training with valuable lessons learned through trial and error, and by borrowing and incorporating lessons from other organizations and sources both internal and external to the conflict in Iraq. Although the insurgency was largely incapable of conducting sustained training and exercises it compensated for this deficiency by deliberately modifying critical inputs to expand organizational competency and generously allowed for wide-ranging

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<sup>691</sup> Felter, Joseph and Brian Fishman, *Iranian Strategy in Iraq: Politics and 'Other Means'*, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, NY, 13 October 2008, p. 84.

<sup>692</sup> JAM and Special Group Criminals (SGC) specifically received training in Iran. *Ibid.* See also Cochrane, Marisa, "Special Groups Regenerate," *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, Summer 2007—Summer 2008, p. 7.

<sup>693</sup> Kagan, Kimberly, "Iran's Proxy War Against the United States and the Iraqi Government," *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, May 2006—August 20 2007, p. 2.

experimentation throughout the broader organization. Furthermore, the insurgency purposefully manipulated its networked structure for training and learning. Networking not only benefited the insurgency's operations by taking advantage of stealth and speed, it also benefited its training and preparation by placing a premium on learning, innovation, and information sharing.

By chance and design and through success and failure the insurgency developed and trained engagement techniques that took advantage of its networked structure and reduced the technological advantages enjoyed by the Coalition. "Given their weaknesses, ranging from lack of advanced weapons to inferior or nonexistent training, they know that they have to develop and use tactics that function well below the threshold of the utility of Coalition tactics and weapons systems."<sup>694</sup> The insurgency trained to conduct swarming attacks followed by the quick disengagement and dispersal of forces. Additionally, the insurgency developed, synthesized, and trained methods for causing the most confusion and damage possible through the least detectable means. Multiple remote IED attacks against soft targets, assassinations, and suicide bombings displaying varying degrees of competence all took advantage of the strengths of the insurgency while simultaneously defeating the technological superiority of the Coalition. Training and employing networked attacks allowed for complexity, dispersal, adaptation (both extemporaneous and deliberate), and unpredictability.<sup>695</sup>

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<sup>694</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 180. See also, Munck, Ronaldo and Purnaka L. de Silva, *Op Cit*, p. 1.

<sup>695</sup> For discussion see, Hoehn, Andrew R., et al, *A New Division of Labor: Meeting America's Security Challenges Beyond Iraq*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2007, p. 15.

#### 7.1.4 Constraints

Barriers to entry in the current international security environment are few and the ability of illicit groups and individuals to operate across and within borders has expanded. Unlike the conventional and state-based enemies that dominated the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (and previous) security landscape, new adversaries are considerably more adaptive and capable of adjusting to environmental changes. “The new threat paradigm, in contrast, is generally nongovernmental (or a failed state), nonconventional, dynamic or random and nonlinear in its emergence, with no constraints or rules of engagement. It has no known doctrine, is almost impossible to predict in advance, and is supported by an unlimited 5<sup>th</sup> column of criminals, terrorists, drug traffickers, drug addicts, and corrupt individuals.”<sup>696</sup> The environment hosting these threat organizations and the number of enablers available to facilitate their operations has expanded exponentially. “In this new technological environment, small groups could travel, communicate, finance, and trade globally without state support. Translated into military terms, this allowed small groups to finance, plan, supply, and coordinate attacks globally with little regard for borders, laws, and government.”<sup>697</sup>

Despite an expanded capacity for movement and communication and a relaxation of traditional state-based controls on organizational activity, illicit organizations, particularly networked organizations operating in a failing or failed state, still share a number of constraints

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<sup>696</sup> Steele, Robert D., *The New Craft of Intelligence: Achieving Asymmetric Advantage in the Face of Nontraditional Threats*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 2002, p. v.

<sup>697</sup> Robb, John, *Brave New War: the Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*, John Wiley & Sons, 2007, p. 30.

linked to the population(s) they operate among. For instance, these organizations (particularly an insurgency) must: remain more often than not hidden from licit organizations and forces;<sup>698</sup> have some sanctuary for operational planning and the housing of materiel; attract personnel (both skilled and unskilled) to conduct protracted (and expanded) operations and; develop an indigenous intelligence network to supplant the absence of a robust gathering and analytical capacity common to hierarchical military organizations.

Generating and retaining active and passive support for the insurgency and its operations was of principal concern. This required developing and taking advantage of vast social networks across wide and varied constituencies within and near Iraqi borders. Sanctuaries and safe havens, either cross-border or local, could “prolong an insurrection indefinitely”<sup>699</sup> or could dry up as support shifted or waned.<sup>700</sup> For example, “AQI uses suburbs, close villages, and villages out in the belts as support zones for operations in the city. These areas are home to safe houses, more elaborate insurgent complexes, weapons caches, weapons assembly sites, and areas where AQI can simply escape security operations.”<sup>701</sup> Thus, those providing asylum had to be protected from undue harm. This was progressively difficult to accomplish as the

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<sup>698</sup> How hidden or covert individuals and organizations must remain depends on the environment where they are operating.

<sup>699</sup> Tierney, John J., *Op Cit*, p. 261.

<sup>700</sup> Kagan argues that “Insurgents rely on particular locations in order to move and meet freely to plan operations, transport goods, and store them. Insurgents assemble car bombs and other explosive devices in ‘safe’ areas.” Kagan, Kimberly, “From ‘New Way Forward’ to New Commander,” *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, January 10, 2007—February 10, 2007, p. 4.

<sup>701</sup> Hamilton, Eric, “The Fight for Mosul,” *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, March 2003-March 2008.

counterinsurgency increasingly operated within the population and thus forced the insurgency to commit acts resulting in collateral civilian casualties. As the conflict proceeded, “Coalition forces continued to attract the majority of attacks, while the Iraqi security forces and civilians continued to suffer the majority of casualties.”<sup>702</sup>

Attracting local support for recruitment drives was also important as the bulk of insurgent fighters were drawn from the Iraqi population. Recruitment required taking advantage of the same social networks that enabled and shielded insurgent operations. Personal contact and familiarity were considerable and necessary recruitment facilitators. Although the internet proved invaluable for insurgent knowledge transfer and propaganda purposes, it was not a significant recruitment enabler: recruits rarely mentioned the internet as a recruitment tool (few had ready or reliable internet access) and instead were recruited through social, religious, and familial networks inside and outside of Iraq. In fact, many recruiters had to leave Iraq to attract recruits through more traditional methods.<sup>703</sup> Compounding these difficulties were bureaucratic inhibitors emplaced by AQI on the passage of insurgents through Iraq’s borders. As Fishman documents, AQI was highly bureaucratized, required insurgents to sign entrance contracts, and insisted that some exiting fighters “sign contracts demanding they not join other Jihadi groups.”<sup>704</sup>

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<sup>702</sup> Report to Congress, Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, September 2007, p. 20.

<sup>703</sup> For discussion see, Watts, Clinton, Op Cit. Fishman argues that “Foreign fighters who ended up in Iraq appear overwhelmingly to have joined the Jihad through local Jihadi sympathizers (33.5%) and personal social networks.” See, Combating Terrorism Center, Bombers, Bank Accounts & Bleedout: Al-Qa’ida’s Road in and out of Iraq, Ed. Fishman, Brian, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, 2008, pp. 7-8.

<sup>704</sup> Combating Terrorism Center, Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout: Al-Qa’ida’s Road in and out of Iraq, Ed. Fishman, Brian, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, 2008, pp. 7-8.

Local support was critical for providing information and analysis infused with a thorough understanding of the host environment. A networked insurgency does not have an inherent capacity for higher order intelligence collection and analysis and must supplement the capabilities of its operators in this endeavor. The population acted as the eyes and ears of the insurgency and provided a level of analysis impossible to obtain without detailed knowledge of local personalities and conditions. When support for the insurgency faded and when indigenous Iraqi organizations shifted allegiances, what remained of the insurgency lacked any meaningful capacity for supporting durable long-term initiatives or for developing a comprehensive picture of the operational environment. Moreover, population support tends to be a zero-sum game: any loss by the insurgency (either passive or active) was necessarily a gain for counterinsurgent forces.

Like any networked organization operating across jurisdictions and international boundaries, host sustenance and support can mean the difference between operational success and failure. Currying, retaining, and cultivating local favor is vital. Despite enhanced capacities afforded by technological advances and conditions favorable to networked operations, including but not limited to the complete collapse of formal state and local security in Iraq, the insurgency's fate was inextricably tied to the local population. Maintaining population support was a significant constraint that limited the insurgency's ability to act with impunity and without due concern for prevailing local sentiment. "It is generally assumed that the insurgency has a core of combatants, with a significantly larger pool of active and passive supporters."<sup>705</sup> Organizational behavior, whether or not it took into account local attitudes, was constrained by them. Restraint was necessary for success and organizational targets had to be chosen wisely. In

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<sup>705</sup> Bowman, Steve, Op Cit, p. 8.



this respect, the insurgency failed miserably as the conflict in Iraq wore on.<sup>706</sup> Exposition, blindness, and an inability to expand the organization were all side effects of failing to heed organizational limitations and constraints.

### **7.1.5 Organizational Context Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- The more complex the insurgency and the more convoluted its composition and supporting constituencies, the more likely competing organizations will experience friction as they try to accomplish their goals and achieve rewards. An overarching, trans-organizational goal does not suppress other diverging organizational goals. Although the complexity of the insurgency confounded counterinsurgent efforts, created a massive de facto resource and personnel pool for affiliated organizations, and enhanced the insurgency's capacity for operations, it also diminished the organization's ability to positively adapt inputs and outputs toward coherent and common goal achievement.
- Dedicated resources (information offices, spoken word recordings, print materials, internet broadcasts and databases, digital photography, etc.) and entrenched feedback loops populated by well-placed sources and local populations enhanced the insurgency's capacity for influencing the information environment. Ubiquitous, low cost, and replaceable technologies operating on state or Coalition run transmission systems allowed insurgent organizations to rapidly respond to and counter the efforts of the Coalition.

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<sup>706</sup> See Appendix B. In general, and whether intentional or not, the insurgency killed more and more Iraqi civilians as the conflict evolved.

- Uneven skill sets among insurgent organizations and members led to operational failures and “Combat Darwinism,”<sup>707</sup> but also led to vast organizational experimentation. Coincidentally, insurgent experimentation and wily tactical innovations (intentional and unintentional) kept counterinsurgent forces off-balance. Training occurred on the job, utilized the experiences of organization members, was supported by external groups and state-sponsored professionals, and focused in the main on low-tech and simple but coordinated tactics. Varied but broadly implemented low-level training exercises and rehearsals (many recorded for educational purposes) ensured that the insurgency adapted comprehensively to individual successes and failures.
- The insurgency faced few constraints on organizational behavior other than the need to maintain population support; active if possible and passive if not. Population support facilitated and concealed operations, drove local recruitment, and helped maintain influence if not control over the information environment. Acting with impunity or a lack of sufficient respect for this constraint imposed significant organizational costs.

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<sup>707</sup> Term coined by Ahmed Hashim. See, Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 159.

## 7.2 GROUP DESIGN & CULTURE

### 7.2.1 Composition

What made the insurgency in Iraq truly unique was its immensely diverse, decentralized hybrid-networked character. “Networks can vary in size, shape, membership, cohesion, and purpose. They can be large or small, local or global, cohesive or diffuse, centrally directed or highly decentralized, purposeful or directionless. A network can be narrowly focused on one goal or broadly oriented toward many goals, and its membership can be exclusive or encompassing. Networks are at once pervasive and intangible, everywhere and nowhere.”<sup>708</sup> Two veterans of the Iraqi conflict concur:

*“Things didn’t always apply across the board...different enemy cells were doing different things...There was no standard, we pretty much had to be ready for everything.”*<sup>709</sup>

*“You don’t necessarily have a homogeneous enemy and it evolves at different times and places throughout the country.”*<sup>710</sup>

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<sup>708</sup> Williams, Phil, “The Nature of Drug-Trafficking Networks,” *Current History*, April 1998, p. 155.

<sup>709</sup> Soldier Deployed to Baghdad (Early 2003; 2006-2007), Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

<sup>710</sup> Major General Perkins, David, Telephone Interview, 21 September 2008.

Heterogeneity and decentralization ensured that insurgent organizations would not have to bend to missions but instead would form or cooperate with one another based on shared requirements, interests, and goals, particularly when operations called for specialized functions and capabilities. Decentralization was reinforced by localism and manifested in the rejection of defined leadership, a dearth of cross-organizational cohesiveness, and eventually, unsuccessful efforts to constructively reconcile disparate organizational goals. “The most important structural characteristic of the Iraqi insurgency is its high degree of decentralization. This is particularly apparent in the lack of identifiable leaders. The individual groups typically operate on a local, and only occasionally on a regional basis.”<sup>711</sup> Absent an intrinsic center of gravity and a hierarchical command structure, the insurgency defied comparison with its more conventional predecessors.<sup>712</sup>

At times and across differing organizations, the insurgency exhibited hierarchical traits (particularly those composed of former regime elements), networked traits (tribal and localized insurgent groups), or elements of both organizational types (Fedayeen Saddam).<sup>713</sup> The insurgency essentially was a loose arrangement of peripheral organizations acting initially in goal-oriented concert but with varying levels of intensity and ambition. The discovery, infiltration, or disbandment of any particular peripheral unit had no major effect on the rest of the

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<sup>711</sup> Steinberg, Guido, *Op Cit*, p. 18.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6. Crevelde argues that, “Insurgent organizations rarely have a clear center of gravity—a single group of people, installation, or location around which everything revolves and whose elimination or occupation would lead to their collapse.” Crevelde, Martin van, *The Culture of War*, Ballantine Books, NY, 2008, p. 299.

<sup>713</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 155.

network. Parts of an organizational periphery could “be cut off from the network or replaced by recruitment of new members.”<sup>714</sup> No single organization within the insurgency was supreme and none had firm or durable control over other significant parts of the network. “It is possible to depict the insurgent network as a constellation of groups that cooperated but also shifted positions and loyalties as their motivations and actions changed.”<sup>715</sup>

The insurgency’s composition was initially based on one shared goal: compelling the withdrawal of Coalition forces from Iraq. Circumstance more so than design impelled organizational form although the former was shaped by the actions of the insurgency’s chief competitors over time: “Counterterrorist actions by the United States and its allies are responsible, at least in part, for al-Qaeda’s increased reliance on loose networks of operatives to conduct operations. Arrests of senior leaders and the loss of its Afghan haven have forced the group not only to turn to other established terrorist affiliates to conduct attacks but also to operate in a more decentralized, cellular fashion.”<sup>716</sup> Individual members and organizations were not deployed based on timelines; organizational activities were neither dictated nor circumscribed according to a set of detached institutional goals. Objectives and goals helped direct but were not determinative of form and function or the varying levels of cooperation that emerged between and among groups and individuals. Thus, the operational behavior and nature of the insurgency was as multiform as its composition. “In reality the form of insurgency—

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<sup>714</sup> Lemieux, Vincent, Criminal Networks, Research and Evaluation Branch, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Ottawa, Canada, March 2003, p. 14.

<sup>715</sup> Wright and Reese, Op Cit., p. 102.

<sup>716</sup> Rabasa, Angel, et al, Beyond al-Qaeda Part 1: The Global Jihadist Movement, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006, p. 40.

terrorism, guerrilla, mass-protest, or any combination of these—is mainly determined by objective conditions rather than by strategic conceptions of the insurgents. The most important factor is capability. Usually, the insurgents utilize every possible mode of struggle that can advance their cause.”<sup>717</sup>

The insurgency’s compositional heterogeneity was reflected in its organization and in the breadth of its participating groups. “There are a remarkable number of insurgent organizations. They vary widely in levels of skill, functional specialization, professionalism, number of personnel, modus operandi, targeting and longevity.”<sup>718</sup> Most of these groups, to varying degrees, were supported by or had linkages to a number of larger organizations (although control or coordination was not implied by this relationship or its structure).<sup>719</sup> Larger organizations were divided into a series of supporting or linked brigades although the relationships and command structures differed in each (if they existed at all). Depending on organizational requirements and operational necessities, some larger groups took the opportunity to plan and coordinate interests and on occasion to cooperate with one another. “In winter 2005/2006, the Jihadists attempted to create larger organizations through a process of consolidation. In some cases, the mergers were genuine, while others were simply media stunts. What lies behind these efforts is not entirely clear, but it is probably related to the emergence of the two competing

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<sup>717</sup> Merari, Ariel, “Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Volume 5, Number 3, Winter 1993, p. 248.

<sup>718</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 170.

<sup>719</sup> Listed previously in this chapter.

camps.”<sup>720</sup> In September of 2007, Ansar al-Sunna and the Mujahideen Shura Council (MSC) held joint planning sessions; in November 2007, the Mujahideen Army claimed joint responsibility for an attack with ‘Islamic State’ fighters.<sup>721</sup> Guido claims that by late 2006 there was a consolidation effort launched by the national Islamist and Jihadist camps in Iraq.<sup>722</sup> The composition and relationships that comprised the insurgency, even at the highest organizational levels, changed according to opportunity and need. For example, as AQI’s power further waned in 2007 it formed formal organizational partnerships and alliances with several other insurgent organizations and drew still others “into its orbit.”<sup>723</sup> Coordination of this sort represented a tacit acknowledgement that not even a central and endowed insurgent organization (like AQI) could dominate or control the direction of an insurgency with such a varied and differently ambitious membership. When necessity and objective conditions dictated, organizations would cooperate with one another to the extent that was possible and when potential benefits could be realized.

AQI, at one end of the organizational spectrum, had a very structured organization consisting of: a commanding officer, an information officer, an intelligence officer, political committee, executive officer (with a martyrdom coordinator for regional or city groups), an Islamic law committee, a finance officer, and a logistics officer.<sup>724</sup> AQI also maintained tightly organized tactical units but devolved control of operations to local amir. “Each amir selects

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<sup>720</sup> Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit, p. 17.

<sup>721</sup> Marsh, Bill, “The Ever-Mutating Iraq Insurgency,” The New York Times, 7 January 2007.

<sup>722</sup> Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit, p. 17.

<sup>723</sup> Marsh, Bill, Op Cit.

<sup>724</sup> Nance, Malcolm W., The Terrorists of Iraq: Inside the Strategy and Tactics of the Iraq Insurgency, 2007, p. 281.

deputies to conduct recruiting and personnel placement in the combat cells, initial and advanced combat training, and provides for the logistics. Al Qaeda combat cells operate in groups no bigger than ten to twenty men and, like all insurgent groups, meet or communicate only with trusted men who they know personally or have been vouched for by the organization.”<sup>725</sup> AQI supported its tactical organizations with an intricate and fairly comprehensive logistical network partially established prior to the Coalition invasion.<sup>726</sup> “Al Qaeda had a sophisticated covert organization of safehouses and its own personnel links established immediately before the invasion by Zarqawi who worked in league with the Saddam Fedayeen, the Iraqi Intelligence Service, and *Ansar al-Islam*.”<sup>727</sup> To maintain loyalty and cohesiveness throughout the organization without micromanaging and compromising atomized operations at the tactical level, AQI (like other elements and affiliates of al Qaeda) recruited and promoted and operated based on family, friendship, and nationality ties. Its flat, cellular structure allowed echeloning and communication without reducing operational freedom or excessively breaching operational security.<sup>728</sup>

At the other end of the organizational spectrum from AQI were the organizations and individuals participating in the insurgency on an ad hoc, skill set, or contractual basis. Because the bulk of insurgent activity was taken up by thousands of part-time insurgents performing

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<sup>725</sup> Nance, Malcolm W., Op Cit, p. 283.

<sup>726</sup> “Al-Aq’ida’s allies began moving into Iraq even before U.S. forces entered the country in early 2003. After fleeing Afghanistan and traversing Iran, Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi slipped into Northern Iraq some time in 2002.” Felter, Joseph and Brian Fishman, *Al-Qa-ida’s Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records*, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, 2008, p. 4.

<sup>727</sup> Nance, Malcolm W., Op Cit, p. 284.

<sup>728</sup> Hanratty, Martin E., Op Cit, p. 24.



functions that supported the aims of more permanent insurgent groups, their participation in the insurgency was generally ephemeral.<sup>729</sup> Participants came from near and abroad. An uncoordinated and essentially volunteer cadre of foreign fighters helped filled the ranks of the insurgency throughout the conflict. As Byman and Pollock argue, “Terrorists often find a home in states in civil war.”<sup>730</sup> Attracted by the cause and by the chance of gaining operational experience, individuals from the Eurasian and African continents traveled great distances to participate in the Iraqi insurgency. Regionally, many individuals with direct or even distant relations to Iraq’s Sunni tribes helped expand the rolls of the insurgency.<sup>731</sup> The utility of these volunteers varied. Those foreign insurgents that were directed to Iraq by other non-state actors or groups tended to be of a better caliber and more capable than their unsponsored counterparts.<sup>732</sup> Conversely, foreign fighters with little military or guerrilla training many times ended up being commissioned for suicide bombings.<sup>733</sup>

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<sup>729</sup> Robb estimated that, for planning purposes, on any given day the Coalition could face an active insurgency of over 150,000 members. Robb, John, *How Big is the Iraqi Insurgency?*, 14 October 2005, available at <http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/globalguerrillas/How%20Big%20is%20Iraq%Insurgency.pdf>, accessed on 1 July 2008.

<sup>730</sup> Byman, Daniel L. and Kenneth M. Pollack, *Things Fall Apart*, Brookings, Washington DC, 2007, p. 3.

<sup>731</sup> Al-Siba’l, Hani, *Op Cit*.

<sup>732</sup> Hashim, Ahmed, “Foreign Involvement in the Iraqi Insurgency,” *Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor*, Volume II, Issue 16, 12 August 2004, p. 2.

<sup>733</sup> Napeoleoni, Loretta, *Insurgent Iraq: Al Zarqawi and the New Generation*, Seven Stories Press, New York, 2005, p. 186.

Although there were many foreign fighters present in the insurgency, native Iraqis and Iraqi tribal members provided the bulk of insurgent personnel.<sup>734</sup> As for the locals drawn into the insurgency, “Most of the time they [insurgents] lead normal lives, going about their business as usual. On occasion, though, they engage in active hostilities and then disengage as the enemy’s movements and other circumstances may dictate.”<sup>735</sup> Iraq’s tribes and militias contributed vast amounts of personnel and resources to the insurgency. Tribes consist of “nested (vice hierarchically organized) kinship groups. There are thousands of clans, hundreds of tribes, and about two dozen tribal confederations in Iraq today, each with its own sheikh.”<sup>736</sup> Militias directly resisted the counterinsurgency but were most damaging when they weakened “government influence by providing unofficial (and effective) security in localized areas using illegal methods.”<sup>737</sup>

Heterogeneous functional needs contributed as much to the composition of the insurgency as circumstance and organizational ambitions and necessitated unique competency and leadership skills. Even in smaller organizations with limited capabilities, coordinating a diverse membership with varied functional capacities requires skilled leadership and

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<sup>734</sup> McFate, Montgomery, “Iraq: the Social Context of IEDs,” *Military Review*, May-June 2005, p. 29.

<sup>735</sup> Creveld, Martin van, *The Culture of War*, Ballantine Books, NY, 2008, p. 298.

<sup>736</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael, “Tribal Engagement Lessons Learned,” *Military Review*, September-October, 2007, p. 17.

<sup>737</sup> Schwarz, Anthony J. “Iraq’s Militias: The True Threat to Coalition Success in Iraq,” *Parameters*, Spring 2007.

organizational ledgermain.<sup>738</sup> “Whatever the scope of the insurgency, the effective use of people will depend on the skill of insurgent leaders in identifying, integrating, and coordinating the different tasks and roles essential for success in combat operations, training, logistics, communications, transportation, and the medical, financial, informational, diplomatic, and supervisory areas. The complexity of the organizations designed to perform these functions reflects insurgent strategies.”<sup>739</sup>

The scope of the insurgency and each organization’s predilections were signaled by the types of targets each organization chose and their rationale for doing so: “Insurgent groups have attacked and damaged or destroyed power stations, liquid natural-gas plants and oil installations. It should be noted, however, that three types of groups have attacked such critical infrastructure: looters, who may want something of value to use or sell; organized criminals, who wish to resell useable equipment; and politically inspired insurgents, whose attacks keep the occupation authorities from translating their promise of reconstruction into reality.”<sup>740</sup> Conflicting insurgent aims and functional rationales converged despite any significant levels of coordination among groups. Discerning the motivation for an attack or the responsible party merely by identifying the target was nearly impossible.

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<sup>738</sup> For instance, a simple but typical IED cell can “consist of six to eight people, including a financier, bomb maker, emplacer, triggerman, spotter, and often a cameraman.” Wilson, Clay, *Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Iraq and Afghanistan: Effects and Countermeasures*, CRS report for Congress, 25 September 2006, p. 2.

<sup>739</sup> O’Neill, Bard E., *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*, Brassey’s Inc., Washington, DC, 1990, p. 91.

<sup>740</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, pp. 197-198.

The insurgency's composition at times depended on the capacity or will of a member organization to take on certain functions. This made for strange partnering. The nexus between AQI, other elements of the insurgency, and various criminal organizations was premised on the latter's organizational capability even when its adoption came at the cost of broader organizational unity. "Human smuggling often takes place on the same trails as livestock smuggling. There is ample evidence that AQI uses criminal smugglers, who they do not fully trust, to cross the border. AQIs effort to monopolize smuggling networks, which impeded Sunni tribal leaders from much of their traditional livelihood, was an important element convincing Iraqi tribes to cooperate with US forces."<sup>741</sup> Organized crime in Iraq was a means for the accumulation of resources; it helped sustain and precipitate conflict and contributed to alternative modes of governance.<sup>742</sup> Criminal elements were also used for extortion, theft, and kidnapping for ransom.<sup>743</sup> Conversely, elements of organized crime in Iraq established symbiotic relationships with insurgent organizations in order to better take advantage of the economic side effects of mass disorder. Membership in both types of organizations increased. "The development of linkages between insurgent/terrorist groups and criminal gangs becomes much smoother if individuals are members of both organizations and if the politics-driven insurgency/terrorist groups engage in economic criminal activity as a matter either of strategic

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<sup>741</sup> CTC, *Bombers, Bank Accounts, & Bleedout: Al-Qa'ida's Road in and out of Iraq*, Ed. Fishman, Brian, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, 2008, p. 7-8.

<sup>742</sup> For extensive discussion and analysis of organized crime in Iraq see, Williams, Phil, *Criminals, Militias, and Insurgents: Organized Crime in Iraq*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2009, pp. 255-259.

<sup>743</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 169.

policy (to ensure that the state cannot restore normal economic activity) or of replenishing their coffers.”<sup>744</sup>

A variously composed complex insurgency, like that in Iraq, possessed the manifold strengths afforded a networked organization but suffered from the limitations associated with decentralization, namely clashing, competing organizational objectives. “Disunity, in particular, is often the natural by-product of insurgencies waged by groups with segmented structures.”<sup>745</sup> Disunity manifested structurally and culturally and was difficult to avoid given the varied composition of the insurgency and the breadth of contrasting organizational goals. Cooperation was as likely as friction and as the insurgency wore on and as organizations took diverging paths towards their goals. AQI and its affiliates were dominated by foreign fighters whom many Iraqis resented, particularly as AQI’s enhanced violence became more indiscriminate.<sup>746</sup> And, even though AQI and indigenous groups did share the goal of compelling a Coalition withdrawal, many formerly affiliated groups parted ways as they found better methods for achieving their goals. “Groups like Anbar Revenge Brigade have come to the conclusion that the best way to reduce the coalition troop presence in their home regions is to flush out al-Qaeda elements in their cities. Iraqi Sunni tribal and religious leaders have been victims of al-Qaeda attacks, further turning key tribes in al-Anbar against al-Qaeda elements.”<sup>747</sup>

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<sup>744</sup> Ibid.

<sup>745</sup> O’Neill, Bard E., *Op Cit*, p. 61.

<sup>746</sup> Marsh, Bill, *Op Cit*.

<sup>747</sup> Khalil, Kydia, “Anbar Revenge Brigade Makes Progress in the Fight Against al-Qaeda,” *Terrorism Focus*, Volume III, Issue 12, 28 March 2006, pp. 1-2.

The insurgency's diverse composition and networked structure endowed incalculable resources to various participating groups. Enhanced information sharing, the availability of key individual and organizational skills, and the power of numbers absent central direction all contributed to the adaptive capacity of the insurgency. But while a diverse composition provides a bounty of skills and resources it also presents the challenge of reconciling diverse objectives and goals. "Rival groups may have a deleterious impact on an insurgent movement, the government, or both. Where more than one disadvantaged group is incorporated into insurgent ranks, the size and capability of the movement may increase. Sometimes, however, it creates problems with respect to cohesion."<sup>748</sup> When organizational differences could not be overcome (as was the case with the Iraqi insurgency from at least late 2006 onwards) and different groups sought different means to achieve assorted organizational ends, the insurgency's compositional diversity transformed from an asset into a liability. As a result of this fracture, the adaptive capacity of the insurgency plummeted and various formerly cooperating organizations turned into fierce competitors.

### **7.2.2 Norms**

Organizational norms differed significantly in Iraq because so many distinct types of organizations comprised the insurgency. Norms prohibiting suicide bombing, acts of terrorism, or other more taboo methods of attack were accepted by many Iraqis and Iraqi insurgent organizations but were embraced by foreign organizations, particularly those affiliated with al

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<sup>748</sup> O'Neill, Bard E., *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*, Brassey's Inc., Washington, DC, 1990, pp. 60-61.

Qaeda and especially those affiliated with Abu Musab al Zarqawi. Like other variable organizational attributes examined in this study, differing sets of norms led to inconsistent trans-organizational behaviors. The eventual dissolution of the broader insurgency and tectonic shifts in popular support for different organizations could at least be partially attributed to the capricious organizational norms exhibited by a number of insurgent organizations in Iraq.

Different sets of norms led each insurgent organization to set different standards of conduct for their members. Standards of conduct were increasingly important for retaining local support as the conflict in Iraq progressed and general support for the insurgency waned. Local Iraqi populations enabled most if not all insurgent organizations and bore the brunt of insurgent activity; their support was critical to any insurgent organization's success, especially in the long-term. Although violence in Iraq was endemic and the insurgency went out of its way to highlight the fact that the government could not provide security, the insurgency had to balance its barbarity against losses of popular support.<sup>749</sup> Norms shaped organizational behavior which in turn had either a positive or negative effect on the attitude of the local population. Thus, where norms were more conventional and tempered, organizational behavior was subdued and popular support was retained. Where norms were unconventional and flexible, organizational behavior was unencumbered and popular support was lost. Even amongst the more extreme foreign elements of the insurgency there was some recognition of this fact.<sup>750</sup> Organizational norms had to adhere to some standard so as to not eventually jeopardize organizational goals: the latter had

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<sup>749</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 329.

<sup>750</sup> Zarqawi's organization had substantial disagreements with al Qaeda's foreign leadership on norms and behavior with the latter realizing that the brutality of AQI was disrupting the achievement of organizational goals.

to be in concert with the former as each helped shape organizational behavior. At times, these ideologies and goals came into conflict. This was certainly the case when AQI rejected moderation in favor of greater group cohesion<sup>751</sup> and as a result suffered a significant drop in popular support.

Methods selected or accepted for achieving organizational goals in some ways reflect organizational norms and predilections: the looser the organization's norms and the more expedient the method, the more likely extreme methods—like terrorism—will be adopted. But method selection can have a decidedly negative impact on an organization's ability to achieve its goals, despite contrarian intent, when long-term objectives are sacrificed for short-term gains and popular support is not appropriately respected or accounted for. This is especially true when indiscriminate acts of violence are employed which, overwhelmingly and negatively affect the local population. As Silverman and Jackson argue, "One factor which cannot be neglected when examining terrorism is the degree and quality of violence. When the objectives of terrorism are ignored, and selective, discriminatory assassination and sabotage turn to wholesale, uncontrolled massacre, the effects of terrorism become counterproductive. Any sympathy which the mass might have had for the insurgents is lost by the excesses of terrorism. In situations of intense emotional involvement, however, it may be difficult for terrorist leaders to restrain brutality and savagery."<sup>752</sup> Although norms and standards are difficult to maintain—even when their maintenance is critical to the organization receiving the support it needs to achieve its goals—

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<sup>751</sup> Fishman, Brian, "After Zarqawi: The Dilemmas and Future of Al Qaeda in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 2006, p. 20.

<sup>752</sup> Silverman, Jerry M. and Peter M. Jackson, "Terror in Insurgency Warfare," *Military Review*, October 1970, p. 64.



controlling organizational behavior across a loosely defined network of individual organizations, each having a parochial set of norms, is nearly impossible.

Norms significantly defined how organizations in Iraq conducted operations and managed internal affairs. Tribally based insurgents developed operational security based on cultural and social norms rather than the bureaucratic norms of the cells of former regime elements.<sup>753</sup> Other groups set up tribunals and established specific rule books for the treatment of prisoners based on a standardized set of norms.<sup>754</sup> Standards of practice and behavior to include the treatment of friendly and enemy combatants were also shaped by organizational norms and by attitudinal changes based on positive interactions with counterinsurgent forces. The consequences for violating organizational norms, even when in contact with the enemy, were sometimes dire. As one soldier explains:

*“My guy that got killed was an IED strike. The guy that was the trigger man was killed by the insurgency because he chose the wrong target. They looked at bumper numbers and my units always passed through with no issue. When I went on a battalion operation and I had another unit cover down on me, they always got hit without fail. There was no pattern to it because we did our operations at different days and different times so they had no ability to determine when we were going to be somewhere. We caught a few guys and they knew exactly what we were doing. We had local guys asking us, hey, are all these your vehicles?”*

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<sup>753</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 166.

<sup>754</sup> International Crisis Group, *Op Cit*, p. 12.

*Do they all have this on there? Yeah, why? It took us about a couple of days to figure out what they were doing. We were nice and providing aid. We had won the support of those people but the guys that were relieving me had pissed them off in some way so they were taking out their anguish and frustration on them. We were nice to them and helped them out and they respected us for that and they disrespected the units that didn't do the right thing. At the same time, they still have an obligation as part of their insurgency to do a mission but they picked and choose their targets accordingly.”<sup>755</sup>*

Despite initial organizational goal confluence and a generalized set of commonly accepted violent insurgent practices, organizational norms for Iraqi insurgents were strikingly different than those for foreign organizations. Shultz and Dew explain that violent resistance is an accepted cultural practice in Iraq and has been ingrained in tribal traditions, communal identity, and “values deep into the social fabric.”<sup>756</sup> This social fabric is built upon kinship (tribal, clan, and family), association (former regime elements), local and nationalist interests with kinship being the most important of the three.<sup>757</sup> Among the Iraqi population, “People who may not actively support the insurgency are still quite forward about expressing their admiration

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<sup>755</sup> Soldier Deployed on Initial Invasion (September 2002-August 2003) and Baghdad (January 2005-January 2006), Personal Interview, 8 October 2008.

<sup>756</sup> Shultz, Richard H. and Andrea J. Dew, Op Cit, p. 251.

<sup>757</sup> White, Jeffrey, Op Cit, p. 4.

for the insurgents and their activities”<sup>758</sup> because of a common interest in ousting the Coalition, a perceived common threat, and a sense of solidarity with supported organizations. Outside of a likely shared Arab descent, foreign born insurgents shared very few if any characteristics with indigenous Iraqi insurgents or the local population. Therefore, violence inflicted by foreign-based insurgent groups was not nearly as accepted as violence perpetrated by local Iraqi groups and individuals. Organizational legitimacy and popular support waned as levels of barbarism increased and barbarism was usually perpetrated by foreigner-led or foreigner-dominated insurgent organizations.<sup>759</sup>

Organizationally, al Qaeda did little to support its cause as the population grew tired of the violence engendered by the insurgency. As one insurgent formerly in cooperation with al Qaeda explains, “Anyone who has followed the impact of Al-Qaida in the Diyala province will generally find that wherever they go, they cripple daily life. We can summarize their actions in the Diyala province as follows: demolishing mosques (as what befell the Kanaan Mosque) and interrupting prayers; stealing the salaries of deserving retirees; preventing rations from reaching the people of Diyala for allegedly supporting the Iraqi Ministry of Trade; stealing livestock, especially from the families of martyrs from the mujahideen; killing women and children, and mutilating their bodies, as what befell our brothers from Asaib al-Iraq al-Jihadiya and some of our mujahideen in Kanaan and Bahrar; shuttering hospitals and stealing many valuable pieces of

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<sup>758</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 132.

<sup>759</sup> International Crisis Group, *Op Cit*, p. 10.

medical equipment, destroying them or else exporting them to unknown locations.”<sup>760</sup> Al Qaeda intentionally perpetrated grotesque acts of violence to intentionally cow or provoke the local population: the indiscriminate use of car bombs and chemical weapons;<sup>761</sup> the outright fostering of chaos and instability in various locales;<sup>762</sup> the use of Suicide Vehicle Borne IEDs or SVBIEDs to maximize civilian casualties and; the assassination and desecration of tribal leaders.<sup>763</sup> Al Qaeda’s lack of normative prescriptions limiting the use of indiscriminate violence and terrorism led to a split with other insurgent organizations and an almost total loss of support by locals. Rosen argues that, “In the end, Iraq’s Sunnis wanted a stable Iraq, but under their control. Nor were they interested in Zarqawi’s puritan ideology. It was probably disgruntled Iraqi Sunnis who provided the tip that cost Zarqawi his life.”<sup>764</sup>

Two interviews with Iraqi insurgents highlight the split between the Iraqi population and indigenous organizations and foreign organizations, chiefly al Qaeda. First, an insurgent explains his organization’s rationale, “We are a movement established as a reaction to the foreign occupation of Iraq. Our first goal is to liberate Iraq, and then to participate in the re-

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<sup>760</sup> NEFA, “An Interview with ‘ Hamas in Iraq’ (Former Faction of the 1920 Revolution Brigades),” 4 January 2008.

<sup>761</sup> Kagan, Kimberly, “The Anbar Awakening: Displacing al Qaeda from its Stronghold in Western Iraq,” The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard, 21 August 2006—30 March 2007, p. 13.

<sup>762</sup> International Crisis Group, “Iraq After the Surge I: The New Sunni Landscape,” Middle East Report No. 74, International Crisis Group, 20 April 2008, p. 12.

<sup>763</sup> Smith, Neil and Sean MacFarland, “Anbar Awakens: the Tipping Point,” Military Review, March-April 2008, p. 47.

<sup>764</sup> Rosen, Nir, “The Many Faces of Abu Musab al Zarqawi,” [http://www.truthdig.com/dig/item/20060609\\_abu\\_musab\\_al\\_zarqawi/](http://www.truthdig.com/dig/item/20060609_abu_musab_al_zarqawi/).

building of Iraq in accordance with the principles of justice, equality, and citizenship.”<sup>765</sup> Second, an insurgent explains the rift with al Qaeda and the effect that the latter has had on the Iraqi population, “We do appreciate their concerns about jihad and the mujahideen, and we apologize for those who have stepped beyond the boundaries of good Muslim behavior...after a series of criminal actions launched by the Al-Qaida network targeting innocent civilians and, separately, other jihad movements.”<sup>766</sup> Lastly, an insurgent explains that his organization is in cooperation with other like-minded Iraqi organizations in support of goals in concert with local sentiment, “Since the establishment of the movement, we have tried to work in cooperation with all the other armed organizations, and that was through the creation of a liaison office in 2006 with the Mujahideen Army, the Islamic Army in Iraq (IAI) and the Islamic Front for the Iraqi Resistance (JAAMI).”<sup>767</sup>

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<sup>765</sup> NEFA, “Exclusive: An Interview with ‘ Hamas al-Iraq’,” June 2008, <http://www.nefafoundation.org>, accessed on 10 July 2008.

<sup>766</sup> NEFA, “An Interview with ‘ Hamas in Iraq’ (Former Faction of the 1920 Revolution Brigades), 4 January 2008. Kohlman expands on this rift: “The drive towards consolidation of power and influence by predominant insurgent organizations has created unprecedented internal friction and has demonstrated—quite vividly at times—that the Sunni militants at war with the U.S. and Iraqi governments are far from a monolithic threat. Indeed, these groups often are markedly distinct from each other—structurally, ideologically, and politically. Under public pressure from fellow Sunni insurgents, Al-Aqaida’s network in Iraq has been forced into constantly attempting to justify and defend its use of suicide bombings and foreign fighters.” Kohlman, Evan F., *State of the Sunni Insurgency in Iraq*, August, 2007, NEFA, 2007, p. 30.

<sup>767</sup> NEFA, “Exclusive: an Interview with ‘ Hamas al-Iraq’,” June 2008, <http://www.nefafoundation.org>, accessed on 10 July 2008.

A failure to reconcile organizational norms and to realize the effect that disparate norms had on the local population eventually contributed to the dissolution of the foreign and indigenous elements of the Iraqi insurgency and a near total collapse of support for any foreign-led or affiliated insurgent organizations in Iraq. Organizational norms permitting behavior wholly unacceptable to the supporting population practically ensured operational failure in the long run.

### **7.2.3 Tasks**

Insurgent tasks are derived from organizational goals and are shaped by environmental indicators. There is no prearranged list of tasks attendant to a nascent insurgent organization; it has little if any inherent organizational memory and is free of bureaucratic direction. This does not mean that organizational members do not have memories, were not involved in or did not seek to develop bureaucracies, are not subject to the rules and guidelines imposed by external group membership, and can perceive the environment well enough to prosecute tasks effectively but it does mean that the organization is essentially *de novo* and has significant freedom in task design and implementation. Thus, insurgent organizations in Iraq designed tasks to support their organization's goals (a combination of defeating the counterinsurgency and advancing organizational interests in the chaotic post-invasion environment: power, prestige, profit, security, influence, etc.). The insurgency had few benchmarks for establishing task sets other than some recurring tasks involving attacks on Coalition forces, the Iraqi government apparatus, and civilians. Organizational experimentation based on environmental changes became endemic. This made predicting insurgent behavior nearly impossible.

Organizational tasks predicated on defeating the counterinsurgency varied but followed a fairly straight line from less to more complex attacks as the conflict proceeded:

*“On my first trip, they would hit and run, they did not want to conduct ambushes. Second trip, they were conducting baited ambushes and suckering us into heavy attacks.”*<sup>768</sup>

Violent activities were a large part of most insurgent organizations’ task sets. Violence was for the most part, “neither spontaneous nor self-sustaining” and was used in an instrumental fashion to achieve organizational goals.<sup>769</sup> Accordingly, small arms hit-and-run attacks were initial staples of most insurgent organizations. Insurgent organizations built upon these tasks by incorporating a mix of automatic weapons and RPGs into coordinated and quickly evolving ‘micro attacks’ that were short in duration but involved a respectable amount “planning, command and control, manoeuvre and the involvement of several elements.”<sup>770</sup> Most of these types of tasks required only modest organizational resources but were difficult to defend against and typically generated the intended response by counterinsurgent forces: overwhelming force employed with significant civilian casualties and/or collateral damage.<sup>771</sup>

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<sup>768</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>769</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael, U.S. Post-Surge Options in Iraq, Testimony before the House of Representatives, House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on oversight and Investigations, 23 January 2008, p. 2.

<sup>770</sup> Knights, Michael and Jeffrey White, Op Cit, p. 21.

<sup>771</sup> Ibid.

Depending on an organization's interpretation of the environment, different tasks were practiced, planned, and employed. Terrorist style attacks were used to draw repressive responses from Coalition forces while and when the cost of these attacks remained low.<sup>772</sup> Insurgent organizations also formed tasks based on the strengths of the networks they developed (quick assemblage and dispersal) and on perceived weaknesses of their targets (inability to predict attacks and defend). To do so, the insurgency combined less complicated tasks into coordinated attacks by 'swarming' as opportunities and targets presented themselves. Swarming allowed insurgent organizations to "move slowly, in cycles, and episodically, concentrating on highly vulnerable targets at the time of its choosing."<sup>773</sup>

As the conflict in Iraq progressed, an emerging task list appeared, evolved and was refined based on organizational goals: political and military operations (counter-coalition, counter-collaboration (against the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)); counter-mobility (convoys and transport); counter-reconstruction (infrastructure and contractors); counter-stability (civilians, religious sites, diplomats) and; counter-election.<sup>774</sup> Guido defines task evolution more broadly and in phases:<sup>775</sup>

- Phase 1—Classic guerrilla warfare (through 2003);

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<sup>772</sup> See, Rubin, Michael, "Asymmetrical Threat Concept and its Reflections on International Security," Presentation to the Strategic Research and Study Center (SAREM) under the Turkish General Staff, Istanbul, 31 May 2007 and Merari, Ariel, Op Cit, p. 235.

<sup>773</sup> Cordesman, Anthony H., Op Cit, p. 9.

<sup>774</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael and Jeffrey White, Op Cit, p. 19.

<sup>775</sup> Guido, Op Cit, p. 7.



- Phase 2—Spectacular acts of terrorism, kidnappings, and public relations efforts (2004 to Summer 2005);
- Phase 3—Rise and competition of nationalist organizations (Spring 2005);
- Phase 4—Intensified sectarian violence (February 2006);

In each phase, and progressively, the insurgent task set became more complex and involved more than just violence against competing organizations and designated targets. Correspondingly, fewer organizations had the capacity to carry out necessary organizational tasks and fewer organizations were capable of exploiting environmental changes to achieve organizational goals. Tasks including targeted violence, political maneuvering, and the defense of key territories and populations (to name a few) were difficult if not impossible for many organizations to accomplish. As task sets became more complex and as the environment changed significantly, many organizations withered, consolidated, or became marginalized as they could no longer accomplish organizational goals effectively. As organizations were co-opted, or more generally lost influence, sectarian violence erupted. During Phase 4 (see above) in particular, organizational divisions over goals, missions, direction led to internecine violence and fragmentation largely among indigenous and foreign organizations.

#### **7.2.4 Group Design & Culture Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- The Iraqi insurgency's complexity derived from the number, type, and heterogeneity of networked groups operating in Iraq. Its diverse composition made it exceptional as compared to previous insurgencies. But the insurgency's composition also disrupted coordinated goal achievement, organizational coherence, and cross-organizational

cooperation. The insurgency's diversity provoked organizational divergence and made partnering difficult. A lack of central direction and leadership inhibited adaptation towards common goals.

- Norms, which influence behavior, varied among groups. Iraqi group norms were significantly different than those of foreign insurgent organizations. Iraqi groups (generally) were more restrained in their behavior and actions while foreign groups were not. Within the insurgency, conflicting norms disrupted the accomplishment of long-term goals and the cohesion of cooperating organizations as groups treated each other and local populations differently.
- Tasks are derived from goals and are shaped by changing environmental cues. Organizational tasks evolved as competency increased from the simple to the more complex and coordinated. But as the environment changed and the capabilities required for success compounded, few organizations could reasonably adapt tasks to goals and requirements. Most organizations did not have the capacity to accomplish multiple, coordinated, complex organizational tasks beyond tactical attacks. The competency and organizational skill sets required to complete complex, multi-dimensional tasks generally did not exist and thus, many organizations were unable to appropriately adapt.

## 7.3 MATERIAL & TECHNICAL RESOURCES

### 7.3.1 Equipment

The coalition's failure to secure weapons and explosives caches throughout Iraq ensured that the equipment necessary to wage an insurgency was not in short supply. Military-grade explosives, weapons, ammunition, and specialized equipment, if not detritus from abandoned military posts or centralized in unprotected armories, could be found lying on roadsides or, in the case of rifles and other small arms, in many Iraqi households:

*“At that point in the war it hadn’t gotten as vicious as it turned out. You got pot shots and hand grenades but IEDs weren’t born yet. They didn’t really show up until the Summer of 2003. I remember seeing our First Sergeant and Commanding Officer for a LOGPAC [Logistics Package] and he brought up the term IED, you know, roadside bombs, artillery rounds that are fused up. Funny as it may be, there were artillery rounds all over the roads we had been travelling. We would seem them every day but we never paid attention to them. The consolidation of that stuff hadn’t begun yet.”<sup>776</sup>*

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<sup>776</sup> Soldier Deployed on Initial Invasion then to Samawah, Personal Interview, 18 September 2008. <sup>776</sup> For further discussion see, Metz, Steven and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan: Change and Continuity*, Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2004, p. 11, and Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 163..

Iraq was “awash in weapons of the types that are most useful in a resistance situation: light to heavy automatic weapons, hand grenades and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), mines, military-class explosives, and mortars. These weapons are effective for engaging most coalition units and are mobile and easy to hide.”<sup>777</sup> Other items that the insurgency needed and used (wiring, washing machine timers, alarm clocks, vehicles, ball bearings, garage door openers, binoculars, cell phones, video cameras, etc.) could be found in one form or another in all modern and even many more primitive societies. Furthermore, the expertise needed for assembling and employing this equipment as weaponry (if not available through organizational members) was published on the internet, contained in various how-to manuals like the *Anarchist’s Cookbook* or the *Poor Man’s James Bond*, and was published in various military manuals on tactics, booby-traps, and improvised explosives. For the higher-order construction, maintenance, and employment of small arms and IEDs, the knowledge contained within former government employees, former members of the military, and trained foreign terrorists and professional insurgents sufficed.

IEDs and small arms do not need to be sophisticated in order to be effective (to advance organizational goals) and do not intrinsically necessitate great skill in their manufacture or employment. Each, alone, combined, or utilized as part of a simple or complex tactical operation (ambush, complex ambush, assassination, etc.), is effective for killing soldiers, government officials, and civilians and for causing significant environmental chaos and damage to infrastructure and vehicles. But sophistication in IED construction and emplacement does add to the difficulty of detecting and defusing or counteracting the effects of these devices. Increasing

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<sup>777</sup> White, Jeffrey and Michael Schmidmayr, “Resistance in Iraq,” *Middle East Quarterly*, Volume 10, Number 3, Fall 2003, p. 3.

the sophistication IEDs (particularly when combined with the employment of small arms expanded the range of inputs to insurgent operations. Consequently, outputs were also expanded as tactical operators could attack more varied targets while not exposing the insurgency and its members to greater physical risk or detection. “Beginning in September 2003, IEDs became more sophisticated, evolving from simple suicide attacks to more complex remote-control, vehicle-borne IEDs and daisy-chained IEDs using tripwires. Such a rapid increase in technological sophistication indicates the infusion of ‘expert’ knowledge into the process of building and deploying IEDs. The increased sophistication of IEDs over time also indicates that their design and construction has become a specialized function within the insurgency, rather than a dispersed function.”<sup>778</sup> As the organization benefitted from the use of IEDs, as standalone devices or in conjunction with other methods of attack, the IED became an organizational specialty.

Much of the skill needed to make more complex IEDs came from formerly employed members of Saddam Hussein’s government and military and this capacity was further augmented by the skills of many trained and experienced foreign fighters. “The IEDs that are killing Americans in Iraq were not imported from abroad. Saddam Hussein’s regime designed them. The insurgency’s expert bombmakers are mostly former members of the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS), the Mukhabarat. The IIS unit called M-21 (also known as the Al Ghafiqi Project) operated a laboratory that designed IEDs.”<sup>779</sup> Furthermore, much of the skill needed to mount more complex operations with small arms and explosives came from these same former regime and military members. As these skills proliferated and as more and more unskilled insurgents

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<sup>778</sup> McFate, Montgomery, “Iraq: The Social Context of IEDs,” *Military Review*, May-June, 2005, p. 37.

<sup>779</sup> *Ibid.*

became skilled, the capacity of the insurgency grew and opportunities for successful adaptation expanded.

Although a proliferation of advanced tactics and skills pervaded the insurgency over time, at no point did the insurgency reach any sort of technological parity with the counterinsurgency (particularly not in resources or in their application).<sup>780</sup> This posed problems for the counterinsurgency since many of its assets were designed for detecting and neutralizing high-tech equipment and much of its training and intelligence was premised on its capacity for impeding, degrading, or destroying the capabilities of a technologically adept foe. When the insurgency did employ advanced technological contrivances and equipment, it did so freed from the constraints and restrictions posed by SOP or convention and thus many times avoided the detection tools and methods employed by the counterinsurgency:

*“Our enemy is a parasite, and our own technological culture is the host. Al Qaeda in Iraq and the Jaysh al Mahdi have no R&D and a rudimentary procurement chain. It’s all our own technologies turned back on us. But freed from any rules or law, the terrorists think up things that would not occur to us, like airliners ramming skyscrapers on 9/11.”*<sup>781</sup>

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<sup>780</sup> In fact, the insurgency became somewhat less sophisticated. Small arms attacks increased over time and the insurgency attacked softer targets thus reducing the need for advanced technology and equipment in most of its attacks. See Appendix B.

<sup>781</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, Email Interview, 13 September 2008.

Paradoxically, the insurgency relied on capability multipliers (such as the population and membership skills) that defied technical collection methods and confounded the counterinsurgency's ability to develop a clear intelligence picture or to predict future operational adaptations.<sup>782</sup> The insurgency had no compelling need to pursue or adopt anything more advanced than what was available in Iraq: tactical success was being achieved with creative applications of what equipment and tools were readily available. Any attempts to acquire or to use more advanced weaponry would have risked organizational safety by generating indicators observable to the counterinsurgency.<sup>783</sup> For instance, when EFPs were imported or provided to the insurgency, the networks supplying these devices were uncovered and interdicted. This led to a loss in capacity not only in relation to EFPs but also to the skills and capabilities that the members of these networks provided.<sup>784</sup>

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<sup>782</sup> Moll argues that "Much of the current terrorist threat circumvents technical detection, since the main element of these organizations is the people making up the organization." Moll, Daniel C., U.S. Army Forces for the Global War on Terror, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2003, p. 52.

<sup>783</sup> As Bonomo, et al, contend, "In many cases, terrorists already have roughly equivalent weapons at their disposal, and incremental improvements will not significantly increase their attack capabilities. For example, although an improved explosive might enable terrorists to make a truck bomb smaller, existing truck bombs have been sufficient for most terrorist's needs and desired targets. Therefore, acquisition of some types of advanced weapons by terrorists would not significantly change the balance of capabilities between terrorists and security forces." See, Bonomo, James, et al, *Stealing the Sword: Limiting Terrorist Use of Advanced Conventional Weapons*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 111.

<sup>784</sup> The Iranian government aided both Sunni and Shi'a organizations in Iraq. In addition to EFPs, Iranian agents sold or gave 81mm mortars and mortar rounds and other equipment to the insurgency. See Kagan, Kimberly, "The Battle for Diyala," *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, 11 February 2007-25 April 2007, p. 12.

While low-tech small arms and relatively unsophisticated IEDs were employed in insurgent attacks, the insurgency did utilize higher-tech inter-netted communications to transmit information, images, and lessons gleaned from contact with counterinsurgency forces. The same communications network created and used by the states and forces supporting the counterinsurgency actively benefitted the insurgency.<sup>785</sup> The insurgency did not have to create or control the network; it only needed the network's capacity for individual and organizational exploitation. The insurgency, when not able to operate freely or with a high degree of personal contact, reduced the distance between groups and transmitted communications, technology, and knowledge electronically.<sup>786</sup>

The insurgency enhanced its survivability and the effectiveness of its operations by applying knowledge and experience to the equipment and resources that were available in Iraq.<sup>787</sup> This allowed the insurgency to plan and prepare for attacks while avoiding most counterinsurgent collection capabilities. The availability of equipment and communicative tools also freed the insurgency from expending significant resources for its attainment and from

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<sup>785</sup> Weimann argues, "Paradoxically, the very decentralized network of communications that the U.S. security services created out of the fear of the Soviet Union now serves the interests of the greatest foe of the West's security services since the end of the Cold War: international terror." Weimann, Gabriel, "How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," Special Report 116, U.S. Institute of Peace, March 2004, p. 2.

<sup>786</sup> For a discussion of how terrorist organizations share information see, Cragin, Kim, et al, *Sharing the Dragon's Teeth: Terrorist Groups and the Exchange of New Technologies*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 98.

<sup>787</sup> Taking advantage of and incorporating EFPs (although not available in Iraq but supplied by Iran to the insurgency) and Improvised Rocket-Assisted Munitions (or Mortars) (IRAMs) are a good example of this. For discussion see, Cochrane, Marisa, "Special Groups Regenerate," *The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard*, Summer 2007-Summer 2008, pp. 19-20.



relying on state-based partnerships that characterized previous insurgencies. Whether or not adaptations based on the availability of resources were made consciously or were merely the result of convenient environmental factors, the insurgency nonetheless was capable of expanding its operational capacity while maintaining a low operational signature.

### 7.3.2 Funds

Iraq's insurgents supported operations with funds obtained through various licit and illicit activities. These activities changed as the marginal costs of their conduct changed over time and as differing opportunities availed themselves. For instance, in 2004, the insurgency utilized courier infiltration of funds and accessed cached deposits of local and foreign currencies.<sup>788</sup> In later years and during the infancy of the state's security apparatus, the insurgency created or co-opted smuggling operations, kidnapped for ransom, counterfeited, and charged fees for services normally provided by internal security and border control agencies.<sup>789</sup> These funds were used to

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<sup>788</sup> See, Kilcullen, David, "Counterinsurgency *Redux*," Small Wars Journal, 2006, p. 7.

<sup>789</sup> The insurgency was benefitted passively by patronage from foreign individuals, charities, religious organizations, and terrorist groups. Actively, the insurgency engaged in fee collection for safe passage, kidnapping for ransom, extortion of legitimate services and government contracts, oil smuggling, racketeering, and robbery. See the leaked U.S. intelligence report on this subject, Burns, John F. and Kirk Semple, "U.S. Finds Iraq Insurgency has Funds to Sustain Itself," New York Times, 26 November 2006. See also, Oppel, Richard A., "Iraq Insurgency Runs on Stolen Oil Profits," The New York Times, 16 March 2008, Paley, Amit R., "Iraqis Joining Insurgency Less for Cause than Cash," Washington Post Foreign Service, 20 November 2007, and Guidere, Mathieu and Peter Harline, "Withdraw, Move on and Rampage: Iraq's Resistance Evolves," Le Monde Diplomatique, <http://mondediplo.com/2006/05/02irak>.

help sustain the organization and individuals in the organization, pay for the services of part-time or auxiliary combatants, purchase information from the public and corrupt politicians and security services, and to enable other supporting and tangential criminal activities. The system of financing insurgent activities in Iraq was vastly different in character, scope, and method than systems of external state support utilized during the Cold War and thus presented a range of unique consequences that flummoxed efforts to counter insurgent funding streams.<sup>790</sup>

Illicit behavior engaged in for monetary gain to support other operations, either by design or merely circumstantially, has the side effect of perpetuating environmental conditions anathema to law and order. Crime, looting, kidnapping, and murder, to name a few illicit insurgent activities, engendered fear of the insurgency and a mistrust of government and counterinsurgent forces.<sup>791</sup> This occurs whether or not the population, government, or counterinsurgent forces are the explicit targets of this activity and whether or not general chaos is a prevailing organizational goal. The net result of the insurgents' engagement in funding activities for the potential or actual realization of licit and illicit gains was highly flexible. The insurgency developed an adaptive framework for monetary and in-kind resource gathering that

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<sup>790</sup> "Having lost the support of great powers since the end of the Cold War, terrorist and insurgent groups have sought funding through smuggling, arms trafficking, kidnapping and extortion, piracy, counterfeiting, and other criminal activities." RAND, U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy Must Address Ideological and Political Factors at the Global and Local Levels, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006.

<sup>791</sup> "Criminality also makes daily life unbearable for many Iraqis. Robberies, kidnappings, and murder are commonplace in much of the country." Baker, James A., et al, The Iraq Study Group Report, ISG, 6 December 2006, p. 11.

directly supported organizational objectives with, consequently, the added benefit of disrupting the mission of counterinsurgent forces.<sup>792</sup>

Periods of conflict and instability afford insurgent criminal enterprisers exaggerated access to excess and underutilized economic capacity: chiefly, an un- or underemployed population. Regardless of official employment status, Iraqis seeking wages were used to gather or shield critical information, provide much needed skills from their previous professions (many times martial), and conduct contracted insurgent work.<sup>793</sup> As Kilcullen argues, the insurgents in Iraq “were wealthier than the population, and routinely paid locals to conduct attacks for cash.”<sup>794</sup> The economic disparity between the insurgents and average Iraqis was substantial. Although a number of hired insurgent forces were quickly killed through “Combat Darwinism,”<sup>795</sup> the insurgency benefited by expanding the size and scope of its operations and by flooding the environment with potential and real combatants. Regardless of how this pool of

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<sup>792</sup> This process appears common to a number of modern insurgencies. Felbab-Brown describes a process where insurgents and other belligerents gain not only financially from illicit activities but also develop freedom of action and political capital from enterprise. Each of these benefits are fungible in providing the resources to support organizational objectives. See Felbab-Brown, Vanda, *Shooting Up: Counterinsurgency and the War on Drugs*, The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, 2010.

<sup>793</sup> This does not imply that monetary gain was a sole motivation. Certainly, grievances, nationalism, and religious fervor all combined to fuel the Iraqi insurgency as a grass roots movement. Nonetheless, economic opportunity was another and sometimes principal motivator for attracting average Iraqis to the insurgent cause.

<sup>794</sup> Kilcullen, David, “Counterinsurgency *Redux*,” *Small Wars Journal*, 2006, p. 7.

<sup>795</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 159. Combat Darwinism refers to the quick capture and or death of many poorly trained or inexperienced fighters at the beginning of the insurgency.

resources was specifically utilized, the insurgency manifested its own economy of force by paying for the services of an untapped and previously unpaid or underpaid resource. If nothing else, the contract services paid for by insurgent funds freed professional or committed insurgent forces to conduct higher-order planning and for the organization of longer-term, complex operations.

Supplementary income was an important motivator for many who participated in the Iraqi insurgency; a fact all too well known to insurgent organizations. As Hashim notes, many insurgents “have to hold down a day job.”<sup>796</sup> Supporting the insurgency, if not a primary job or chosen profession, was a form of moonlighting and, although dangerous, paid relatively well and was preferable to being paid little or nothing at all. Creating an alternative marketplace for skills and services significantly weakened the legitimacy of the Iraqi government while simultaneously increasing the costs of counterinsurgent operations. During a period of institutional failure and the breakdown of normal functioning society, this marketplace thrived and became self-sustaining. The revenue used to support insurgent activities was returned through criminal enterprising and created a cyclical market closed to organizations and individuals not in league with insurgent forces.

Siphoning excess labor capacity from an aggrieved and impoverished population provided the insurgency with resource gathering and provisioning flexibility not available to law

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<sup>796</sup> Ibid. Figures for individual income for conducting attacks vary but notably increased as the conflict wore on. “It used to cost just \$50 to hire an Iraqi youth to fire a rocket-propelled grenade at American troops; it now costs \$100 to \$200” in 2004. Oppel, Richard A., “In Northern Iraq, the Insurgency has Two Faces, Secular and Jihad, but a Common Goal,” *The New York Times*, 19 December 2004. The cost for external organization hiring rose even higher over the next 4 years.

abiding organizations, particularly not in a post-conflict environment where state and private resources were few and where legitimacy was at a premium but difficult to establish. “Conflict gives insurgents access to money and resources out of proportion to what they would have in peacetime.”<sup>797</sup> Contracting goods and services with licit and illicit funding streams during a time of conflict creates a shadowy market and insurgent controlled clearing house that paradoxically lends to stability, employment opportunities, and enhanced service provision outside the control of sanctioned or government forces and agencies. But the benefits of creating alternative forms of stability accrue almost solely to insurgent organizations and not to the state or even the population at large. At any time, those benefitting from the stability and employment provided by the insurgents’ alternative marketplace could become its targets.

Frequently, resources gained licitly but used illicitly funded behavior that further engendered support from the local population. Insurgents received sponsorship from supporters of the resistance, Salafist charities, individual donors, and from mosques around the world.<sup>798</sup> These donations formed a large pool of funding to draw upon that was almost impossible to distinguish from other financial transactions carried out on a daily basis.<sup>799</sup> Donations and volunteered support came not only from foreign sources but also from the indigenous population. Active and passive volunteerism on the part of many average Iraqis supplemented the insurgency’s licit funding streams by reducing the potentially prohibitive costs of contracting out

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<sup>797</sup> Metz, Steven, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2007, p. 44.

<sup>798</sup> Nance, Malcolm W., *Op Cit*, p. 270. See also, Looney, Robert, “The Mirage of Terrorist Financing: The Case of Islamic Charities,” *Strategic Insights*, Volume V, Issue 3, March 2006.

<sup>799</sup> *Ibid.*

major portions of insurgent activities. This passive support was rewarded with the provision of security and in some cases access to social services largely unavailable after the fall of Saddam's government. Creating unconventional forms of stability and legitimacy enhanced the reputation of the insurgency and cast a pall over governmental and counterinsurgent operations.

In addition to self-financing and licit support, the insurgency supplemented fund gathering with highly organized criminal activities that took advantage of circumstances and cleavages peculiar to Iraq. In at least one case, the insurgency took active steps to protect a legitimate business to insure a lucrative smuggling operation. Oil smuggling in an oil rich country surrounded by other oil rich countries would not seem, *prima facie*, to be a highly profitable exercise worthy of significant resource investment by the insurgency but this perfectly characterizes the relationship between the insurgency and the Baiji refinery in Northern Iraq.<sup>800</sup> The insurgency also conducted organized crime or worked with extant organized criminal groups as necessity or convenience dictated. Organized criminal groups teamed with the insurgency (if not actively a part of the insurgency) to engage in a mutually beneficial kidnapping business.<sup>801</sup> By taking advantage of the circumstances peculiar to Iraq in the wake of the 2003 invasion and by utilizing criminal enterprise and licit funding streams, the insurgency became financially self-sufficient. This relationship was cyclical and dependent in its causes. Crime was used to gain funding to support the insurgency and the chaos caused by insurgent activities was used to mask and cover rampant criminal enterprise. Both gave cause for continued local and foreign volunteerism and for donations from abroad. By 2006, the insurgency raised tens of millions of

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<sup>800</sup> Oppel, Richard A., Op Cit, 16 March 2008.

<sup>801</sup> Steliga, Mark A., Why They Hate Us: Disaggregating the Iraqi Insurgency, Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, CA, 2005, p. 74.

dollars a year from oil smuggling, kidnapping, counterfeiting, and “connivance by corrupt Islamic charities and other crimes” that the Iraqi government and coalition forces were, by and large, unable to stem.<sup>802</sup>

The accrual of benefits from this mutually symbiotic criminal-insurgent relationship ebbed and flowed between and among various illicit groups. Variable and manifold funding mechanisms enabled the insurgency to adapt to and take advantage of changing circumstances and to circumvent counterinsurgent efforts to target any single source of exchange. Once gained, these funds were used to perpetuate the insurgency and to take advantage of systemic employment problems through the utilization of a capable and talented but chronically underpaid population. Unlike its 20<sup>th</sup> century counterparts, the Iraqi insurgency was particularly and almost wholly entrepreneurial and was thereby capable of creating and realizing advantages on an as-needed basis. As Robb argues, “Guerrilla entrepreneurs...provide innovation in warfare, leverage sources of moral cohesion to grow the group through fictive kinship, find new sources of income through integration with transnational criminality, and much more.”<sup>803</sup>

### **7.3.3 Intelligence**

The insurgency developed an immense intelligence gathering operation that exploited existing social and technical architectures. This apparatus consisted of (but was not limited to) and was

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<sup>802</sup> Burns, John F. and Kirk Semple, “Iraq Insurgency has Funds to Sustain Itself, U.S. Finds,” New York Times Late Edition, 26 November 2006.

<sup>803</sup> Robb, John, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, 2007.

enabled by: informal command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) networks; messengers; the internet; smuggling rings; human contact; street scouts with signals; runners; and cellular telephony. Additionally, the insurgency learned about and developed the capacity to undermine many of the counterinsurgency's most sophisticated intelligence gathering and analysis measures (including Communications Intelligence (COMINT) and Signals Intelligence (SIGINT)).<sup>804</sup> Formal and informal social networks were converted into information gathering, processing, and transmitting associations that defied conventional countermeasures. Individuals, families, groups, and tribes acted as the eyes and ears of insurgent combatant cells.<sup>805</sup> The insurgency's human network conducted active and passive intelligence collection and, perhaps more importantly, engaged in significant counterintelligence operations. These counterintelligence operations not only identified adversarial collection methods and techniques but also took advantage of (mostly) undirected and passive deception and denial: insurgent activities were concealed when the population refused to or did not voluntarily pass along counterinsurgent-relevant information or data.

Having access to thousands of unidentifiable intelligence collectors, processors, and filters enabled a high degree of control of the information environment and an appreciable degree of adaptive capacity. The insurgency collected information and deceived, misinformed, and deprived counterinsurgent forces with the same informal networks it used to inform its own operations and planning. The insurgency's 'eyes and ears' could be switched from passive to

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<sup>804</sup> Cordesman, Anthony H., *Iraqi Security Forces: A Strategy for Success*, Praeger Security International, London, 2006, pp. 45-46.

<sup>805</sup> For discussion see, Hashim, Ahmed S. *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 159.



active, when necessary, to help identify critical nodes of the counterinsurgent network. When these passive measures were insufficient for protecting and informing the organization or when active supplementation was appropriate, the insurgency targeted the counterinsurgency's collection and interpretive efforts by specifically attacking translators and HUMINT operators. Controlling the intelligence environment, maintaining the capacity to suppress environmental and population-based indicators, and targeting competing intelligence collection assets not only supported insurgent operational adaptation but degraded and confused key informational and intelligence inputs to the counterinsurgent adaptive cycle.

By far, the greatest strength of the insurgency's intelligence system was its ability to actively and passively scan, observe, probe, and interpret ambient environmental conditions and counterinsurgent operations and activities through its own dedicated collectors and through the eyes of an adjunct Iraqi population. The ability to use the Iraqi population as an intelligence gathering network was the *sine qua non* of the insurgency's (particularly for the foreign elements of the insurgency)<sup>806</sup> intelligence collection apparatus. Environmental changes are far easier to detect and interpret when an organization's collection system is a constituent part of the environment being observed and/or operated in. This is true for any organization struggling to adapt in a contested environment. The insurgency augmented passive, population-centric collection methods with active (conducted simultaneously with attacks) probing and sensing techniques:

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<sup>806</sup> In the later stages of the conflict, foreign elements, particularly al Qaeda, lost local favor, protection, and intelligence privileges and their capacity to engage in operations and to manipulate the environment diminished significantly. See, International Crisis Group, "Iraq After the Surge I: The Sunni Landscape," Middle East Report No. 74, International Crisis Group, 20 April 2008, p. 7.

*“There was always the threat of one VBIED being followed by another. One part of their [the insurgency’s] process was to figure out how long it took us to respond to a VBIED. They would set off one VBIED and you would get there, set up a cordon, and prepare. They know how long it took you to get there so you would have to prepare for another one.”<sup>807</sup>*

And, the insurgency regularly probed and observed U.S. Army units to determine if perceived superficial changes (uniforms, equipment, etc.) indicated potential or actual operational and behavioral changes:

*“In a report, someone on the council noticed that the people had become scared of our patches. When a new unit came in without those patches that is when they decided to test to see if they were the same type of guys. This happened in Falluja, Shula, and Ghaziliyah...the insurgency is very observant and watches every move—who is pulling security and who isn’t.”<sup>808</sup>*

When operational constants, ROEs, and constraints were detected, they were exploited for maximum effect in ways that were difficult if not impossible to counter:

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<sup>807</sup> Soldier Deployed to Baghdad (March 2004-March 2005), Personal Interview, 22 September 2008.

<sup>808</sup> Soldier Deployed on Initial Invasion then to Samawah, Personal Interview, 18 September 2008.

*“The enemy understood that we had boundaries and would use the rivers to bind us geographically. They would fire their indirect fire across the river in order to disrupt our boundaries. It is impossible to hide anyone to do observation of this. As soon as you enter an area or a house, the locals start acting differently and the insurgents can pick this up. Any change in behavior tips off the insurgents that the Americans are in the area. You cannot blend.”<sup>809</sup>*

Even minor changes were noted and exploited when possible:

*“They paid attention to the small details. Sometimes it only took them a week and sometimes it took six weeks but they would overcome and adapt. They were patient and it allowed them to get the edge sometimes and it forced us to readjust our game plan.”<sup>810</sup>*

The insurgency exploited the U.S. Army’s use of and reliance upon SOPs, tools for developing the environment, and early weaknesses at gathering information in an anthropological conflict environment. The insurgency learned that the Army likes to count and target *things* instead of *people* and that the counterinsurgency had difficulty measuring, developing, and capturing the

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<sup>809</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>810</sup> Ibid.

multi-dimensional attributes of a complex insurgent environment with tools designed for more conventional operations:<sup>811</sup>

*“We could throw up UAVs all day long but the insurgents know what a UAV is. They have satellite TV and when they hear a lawnmower in the sky they go to sleep. The insurgents can watch TV as well as we can.”*<sup>812</sup>

A secondary but more pernicious strength of the insurgency’s intelligence gathering operation was its ability to penetrate competing military and government organizations both directly (through corruption or targeted subversion) and indirectly (through close or inside observation). “Their ability to assassinate or kidnap individuals, and assault convoys and other vulnerable targets has been the result of painstaking surveillance and reconnaissance. Inside information about convoy and troop movements and the daily habits of Iraqis working with the Coalition has been passed to insurgent cells from within the Iraqi security services, primarily the Iraqi police force.”<sup>813</sup> As one al Qaeda Iraq (AQI) member recounts in his diary:

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<sup>811</sup> Cordesman, Anthony H., *Iraqi Security Forces: A Strategy for Success*, Praeger Security International, London, 2006, p. 47.

<sup>812</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>813</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S. *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 164. See also, Hashim, Ahmed S., “The Sunni Insurgency in Iraq,” MEI Commentary, 15 August 2003.

*“our Jihadi Movement goals at the early stages were to recruit as many as possible of the government employees in order to have access, sources and supporters among them in order to gain more information about the Government security forces and the infidels’ military and tactical movements in order to ease our movements and missions against them.”*<sup>814</sup>

This, in combination with other intelligence gathering operations, provided unparalleled depth to the insurgency’s ability to conduct and assess its operations in light of how its opponents observed and assessed the effects of these operations. This facility gave the insurgency a Janus-like observational power that was not similarly enjoyed by counterinsurgent forces. The insurgency, for quite some time, was capable of not only adjusting its organizational inputs and outputs to achieve goals but also of viewing, in good detail, how the counterinsurgency did the same. This multifaceted intelligence gathering architecture allowed the insurgency to efficiently hone its operational capacities while concurrently weakening that of its counterparts.

The insurgency also took advantage of the intelligence gathering capacities of other insurgent and terrorist organizations engaged in operations (against U.S. and other forces) in different theaters. Vast, although mostly hidden, transnational information sharing networks enabled the collusion of various organizational intelligence collectors. Intelligence was compiled in one area of conflict and was transmitted via various means to other areas in order to improve operational capabilities and to exploit weaknesses that otherwise might have gone undetected. “The informational age has provided the insurgents a wealth of strategic

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<sup>814</sup> Abu-Tariq, Daily Diary of al-Qaeda Sector Leader Called Abu-Tariq, 15 October 2007, available at [http://images.military.com/pdf/Col\\_Bacon\\_021108.pdf](http://images.military.com/pdf/Col_Bacon_021108.pdf), accessed 16 October 2008.

intelligence. Through personal visits, telephone, and email, the global jihadist and terrorist network has provided advice on tactics learned in places as diverse as Afghanistan and Chechnya.”<sup>815</sup>

Although the insurgency maintained a durable and robust intelligence gathering network for quite some time, this network was by no means permanent and thus was never a ‘dedicated’ insurgent intelligence asset. As provinces, cities, and neighborhoods slowly acceded to governmental or counterinsurgent control and later actively supported counterinsurgency operations, the insurgency’s intelligence capabilities diminished at an exponential rate. What at one point was a great strength became a great weakness. For the insurgency, absent other traditional (military or defense) intelligence collection capabilities outside of the Iraqi population and the direct observational power of organizational members, intelligence collection was truly a zero sum game: any loss was the counterinsurgency’s gain. The Iraqi population was a low-cost and ready-made intelligence network that could enable either competitor in this conflict. The insurgency’s adaptability was premised on intelligence gathering which was further premised on active and passive support from the population. Transitivity, adaptability and success was founded on support from the population. As support waned, organizational adaptability quickly morphed into rigidity and the insurgency’s intelligence apparatus was reduced to the capabilities provided by its formal members.

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<sup>815</sup> Metz, Steven and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan: Change and Continuity*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2004, p. 12.

### **7.3.4 Material & Technical Resources Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- The insurgency had ready access to enormous amounts of military grade equipment, explosives, small arms, ammunition, user manuals, and communications devices. In addition, the insurgency had access to other low-grade electronic equipment and industrial supplies used for booby-traps, IEDs, and observation. Employed skillfully, insurgent organizations used all available equipment and tools to enhance their survivability, expand stand-off attack distances, and coordinate networked hit-and-run attack capabilities.
- Licit and illicit funding streams were used interchangeably to finance operations, enable recruitment, and contract support from the local population with supplementary income streams. Insurgent organizations paired with organized crime groups and adopted their tactics, techniques, and procedures when possible. Insurgent organizations engaged in crime, looting, kidnapping to raise funds, took donations from external organizations and charities, and colluded with corrupt organizations and individuals. The insurgency was largely self-financing and thus confounded counterinsurgent attempts to cut off or disable any particular source of funding.
- The insurgency developed an expansive social and technical intelligence collection and sharing network to actively, passively, directly, and persistently observe the environment. Dedicated organizational assets and sensitively placed sources conducted express intelligence gathering while the population provided general information on coalition movement and the effects of organizational activities. Pervasive intelligence on the terrain, government deliberations, and coalition actions was shared among insurgent organizations to inform and tailor the planning, training, and execution of operations.

## 7.4 EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

### 7.4.1 Consultation

One of the many interesting and unique characteristics of the Iraqi insurgency was an almost complete absence of consultation with foreign powers and organizations not directly participating in or contributing to the insurgency.<sup>816</sup> Although other countries did covertly or passively support the insurgency (i.e., Syria and Iran), for the most part, the insurgency did not seek out cooperative or consultative relationships with states.<sup>817</sup> By its networked nature, the majority of the Iraqi insurgency did not need the support of states and could instead rely on intra-organizational capacities to provide resources and counseling. Likewise, when leadership was drawn from external sources it was still indigenously tied to participating organizations (unlike in many previous 20<sup>th</sup> Century insurgencies where external cadres helped guide insurgent action and behavior). Guidance therefore loosely and extemporaneously came from within and across the organization. “The insurgency’s leadership reportedly consists of eight to twelve individuals who meet from time to time, inside and outside of Iraq, to discuss organization and tactics.”<sup>818</sup>

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<sup>816</sup> Linkages to any foreign powers were not singular in nature. Insurgents and their organizations were not created by foreign states nor did they exist solely because of foreign sponsorship. Linkages and ties existed prior to the evolution of the insurgency or were developed by members that had multiple organizational bonds. Multi-organizational membership (based on shared experiences, kinship, ethnicity, etc.) could inherently expand the scope of the network without the ties always being active or apparent.

<sup>817</sup> For discussion, see Nasr, Vali, “When the Shiites Rise,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, 2006.

<sup>818</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael and Jeffrey White, “Assessing Iraq’s Sunni Arab Insurgency,” *Policy Focus #50*, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, December 2005, p. 14. Leadership, where it explicitly existed, resulted



The very structure of networked organizations nearly obviates the need for consultation. Indeed, by their very formation, they exist for goal accomplishment and therefore do not necessarily require consultation with or from other groups. Information that would normally be received through external consultation was generated within the organization or was incorporated through the creation of mutually beneficial relationships with other like-minded groups.

#### **7.4.2 Direct Action**

Disentangling direct external support to the Iraqi insurgency is a difficult task. The core of the insurgency franchised many of its operations to supportive locals and erstwhile communal groups. Likewise, the insurgency was supported by the direct action of various unrelated tactical operators that might have consulted with distinguished insurgent organizations but were for all intents and purposes external or adjunct members of the broader movement. Coincidentally, many members conducting direct action on behalf of the insurgency might have belonged to several groups at one time. “An opportunist criminal might sign up as a member of a militia, or a foreign agent might hire a criminal to commit a certain act in exchange for payment. What they all share in common is that they find a strong Iraqi Government that would operate in a manner acceptable to the United States extremely threatening and contrary to their individual

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from internal promotions or status within the organization. Even when external leadership emerged, it had links to organizations participating in the insurgency. See, Shahzad, Syed Saleem, “The Changing Face of Resistance,” *Asia Times*, 23 June 2006, for example.

interests.”<sup>819</sup> Direct action for and with the insurgency then is perhaps best described as actions taken on behalf of the insurgency without explicit (and solitary) organizational membership or discretionary guidance.

Many criminal groups, organized or spontaneous and without clearly articulated ties to insurgent organizations, conducted direct action missions that contributed to the insurgency. This occurred despite the fact that these organizations might have had no corresponding or shared political or ideological interests with insurgent groups. “The vast majority of Iraqi criminals have limited or no ties to the insurgents, although some are clearly ‘for hire’ in terms of what they target or being willing to take pay for sabotage or acts of violence that help create a climate of violence in given areas. Many U.S. and Iraqi intelligence officers believe that some criminal networks are heavily under the influence of various former regime elements or are dominated by them and that some elements of organized crime do help the insurgency.”<sup>820</sup> Many robberies, assassinations, thefts of resources, and smuggling efforts that contributed to the chaos in Iraq were conducted by criminal organizations or other profit driven syndicates.

Foreign and local fighters expanded the scope of the insurgency without any initial or even enduring organizational ties. After the Coalition invasion, over one million Iraqi men and women “professionally trained in the use of Kalashnikovs, RPGs, mines and other non-

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<sup>819</sup> Farrell, Kevin W., “The Challenge of Providing Security in the ‘Post-Combat Phase,’ Urban Environment,” *Warfare in the Age of Non-State Actors: Implications for the US Army*, Eds Gott, Kendall D. and Michael G. Brooks, the Proceedings of the Combat Studies Institute 2007 Military History Symposium, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2007, p. 183.

<sup>820</sup> Cordesman, Anthony H., *Iraqi Security Forces: A Strategy for Success*, Praeger Security International, London, 2006, p. 287.

sophisticated weaponry perfectly fitted to the environment of the urban guerrilla warfare” melted into the Iraqi landscape, many of whom later actively supported the insurgency or were compelled into service:<sup>821</sup>

*“The problem is that the local guy is the executer and AQI is the provider and the one that is giving the guidance, task, and purpose. If I don’t do this, I am in more trouble than if I do. What is the lesser of the two evils?”*<sup>822</sup>

Scores of women fighters emerged to conduct missions to avenge family members and support al-Qaeda’s suicide bombing efforts despite not having organizational affiliation. “Protected by cultural and traditional norms that disallow male security services to search, much less look at Muslim women, it is no wonder that al-Qaeda and affiliated groups view female suicide bombers as an attractive option to weaken the present Iraqi government and drive out coalition forces.”<sup>823</sup> Foreign fighters and volunteers swelled the ranks of the insurgency with zealous suicidal intent mostly absent from local populations and indigenous fighters. “The influx of foreign terrorists and religious extremists is not a massive one. More important than the relatively small numbers of these foreigners is that they constitute a force multiplier and are willing to engage in operations that most Iraqi insurgents would prefer to avoid, such as extremely bloody suicide

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<sup>821</sup> Novikov, Gene, Op Cit, p. 5.

<sup>822</sup> Soldier Deployed on Initial Invasion (September 2002-August 2003) and Baghdad (January 2005-January 2006), Personal Interview, 8 October 2008.

<sup>823</sup> Ali, Farhana, Rising Female Bombers in Iraq: An Alarming Trend, Counterterrorism Blog, 22 April 2008, Accessed 21 June 2008 at [http://counterterrorismblog.org/2008/04/rising\\_female\\_bombers\\_in\\_iraq.php](http://counterterrorismblog.org/2008/04/rising_female_bombers_in_iraq.php).

attacks.”<sup>824</sup> At first, foreign fighters came from Palestinian camps, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Later, militants emigrated from Europe and the greater Middle East.<sup>825</sup> Most of these fighters were not veterans of other conflicts but instead were first time volunteers.<sup>826</sup>

Direct action on behalf of the insurgency by ‘ordinary’ Iraqis, foreign fighters, and various exploitive individuals complicated counterinsurgent efforts to police the community and to generate useful information without tipping its hand to actual or potential insurgents. Furthermore, a suicidal foreign component significantly changed the costs of providing defense to key infrastructure and bases of operation. Even if direct action did little to halt the overall momentum of the counterinsurgency, it certainly complicated its efforts and provided the insurgency with another, if unintended and undirected, arm to sow confusion and disrupt counterinsurgent operations.

### **7.4.3 Cooperation**

Networks can form, coalesce, and decompose as needed in a nearly unobservable fashion aided by social, familial, and network ties and abetted by omnipresent information technologies. The

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<sup>824</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 139. See also, Steliga, Mark A., *Op Cit*, p. 65.

<sup>825</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, pp. 140-141.

<sup>826</sup> The Sinjar Records show that the mean reported birth year of fighters was 1982 and the median was 1984. “The fighters overall youth suggests that most of these individuals are first-time volunteers rather than veterans of previous jihadi struggles.” Felter, Joseph and Brian Fishman, *Al-Qaida’s Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records*, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, NY, 2008, p. 16.

networked insurgency in Iraq was no exception despite the often competing or contradicting interests of its components.<sup>827</sup> Individuals and organizations were folded into other insurgent organizations based on similar interests, goals, ties, and motivations, while for the most part remaining hidden among the Iraqi population:

*“Our enemy survives by blending into the population. These modern information technologies allow our foe to move as freely and swiftly as fish swimming through the sea of the people, just as Mao Zedong always said.”*<sup>828</sup>

Many insurgent organizations cooperated with and hired other ‘insurgents’—in a practice not dissimilar to Coalition service contracting—and a core of dedicated insurgents planned and managed their operations (suicide bombings, emplacing IEDs, etc.). Expanding existing networks and developing new networks and matrices based on organizational needs and membership ties and characteristics formed the basis cooperation for the insurgency in Iraq. As Noel Williams contends, “The principal attribute of matrix warfare is the dynamic nature of its internal membership structure and its external alliance structure. Membership is actualized to fulfill varying combinations of geopolitical, economic, and/or psychological/ideological/religious needs or desires. For example, members can share common economic interests on one level and join together to accomplish a specific goal and then disengage and reshuffle to accomplish a different set of objectives. However, these

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<sup>827</sup> Robb, John, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, 2007, p. 74.

<sup>828</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, E-mail Interview, 13 September 2008.

combinations need not be sequential, but rather can be concurrent and multi-various, such that at any given moment, numerous combinations and associations are possible between the same members, but for different objectives.”<sup>829</sup> Cooperation along these lines made disambiguation of the insurgent structure almost impossible. The insurgency was equal parts ephemeral and enduring: “This presents those who might oppose these organizations with a constantly changing matrix of interconnections, making simple nodal analysis difficult and requiring a multi-dimensional mindset analogous to that required for three-dimensional chess.”<sup>830</sup>

The compelled collapse of the Iraqi state and Iraq’s social structure and multimodal communal ties accelerated cooperation among various groups. “Weak or nonexistent states and rapacious warlords with private armies facilitate the operation of all types of covert networks.”<sup>831</sup> Covert networks that existed in structure prior to the invasion gained purpose and cohesion during the insurgency without an appreciable amount of effort directed toward their formation. “Covert networks often don’t behave like normal social networks. Conspirators don’t form many new ties outside of the network and often minimize the activation of existing ties inside the network. Strong ties, which were frequently formed years ago in school and training camps, keep the cells interconnected. Yet, unlike normal social networks, these strong ties remain

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<sup>829</sup> Williams, J. Noel, “Matrix Warfare: The New Face of Competition and Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Small Wars Journal, August 2005, p. 3.

<sup>830</sup> Ibid.

<sup>831</sup> Milward, H. Brinton and Jorg Raab, “Dark Networks: The Structure, Operation, and Performance of International Drug, Terror, and Arms Trafficking Networks,” Paper Presented at the International Conference on the Empirical Study of Governance, Management, and Performance, Barcelona, Spain, 4-5 October 2002, p. 49.

mostly dormant and therefore hidden.”<sup>832</sup> These ties gave form to what Milward and Raab describe as ‘secret societies’ that are premised on preexisting social structures rather than on psychological factors.<sup>833</sup> The addition of motivation and common goals activated these ties and created a super-organization nearly imperceptible to outside observers.

Some cooperative networks and coalitions formed out of the mass of unemployed potential insurgents created by the invasion. These networks grew without warning and expanded and contracted despite lacking perceptible or public leadership<sup>834</sup> and obvious organizational structures governing their behavior. Capabilities, availability, financial reward, and a desire to act bonded these groups. “Action elements include insurgent groups and criminal organizations, each with its own leadership and decisionmaking process. These make up a ‘web of networks;’ likewise linked by personal, tribal, or organizational ties, and communicating by various means, especially cell phones, the internet, and couriers. Each group is believed to be involved in a range of activities, including recruitment, training, financing, propaganda, political activities, and guerrilla and terrorist attacks.”<sup>835</sup> Insurgent organizational complexity, noted earlier, made fighting the insurgency much more difficult than originally anticipated. “The fact that recent insurgencies have been coalitions is a critical component in understanding them. For too long, American leaders stated that the insurgency in Iraq could not be genuine because it had

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<sup>832</sup> Krebs, Valdis E., “Mapping Networks of Terrorist Cells,” *Connections*, Volume 24, Number 3, 2002, p. 49.

<sup>833</sup> Milward, H. Brinton and Jorg Raab, *Op Cit*, p. 47.

<sup>834</sup> “Each group operates with sophisticated leaders careful to stay in the background while relying on part-timers to carry out attacks and killings on a pay-by-assault basis.” Oppel, Richard A., “In Northern Iraq, the Insurgency has Two Faces, Secular and Jihad, but a Common Goal,” *The New York Times*, 19 December 2004.

<sup>835</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael and Jeffrey White, *Op Cit*, pp. 14-15.

no unifying cause or leader; therefore, it could not be a threat...the lack of unity in current insurgencies only makes them more difficult to defeat. It is a characteristic that we have to accept and understand.”<sup>836</sup>

A sizable cooperative network also grew out of Iraq’s tribal population. Tribes consist of khams (all male children who share the same great-great grandfather); biets or houses (vast extended families with hundreds of members); fakhdhs (group of houses or a clan) and; ahiras (tribal organizations consisting of a group of clans). Tribes can vary widely in size, ranging in population from a few thousand to a million. A group of tribes forms a confederation or qabila.”<sup>837</sup> Many tribal members had useful military experience left over from when they were supported and armed for defense during the Iran/Iraq war and after the Persian Gulf War.<sup>838</sup> Alone, a single tribe could be a significant force, commanding the resources of thousands of potential fighters. In collaboration, the tribes formed by far the largest and most pervasive constituent network of the Iraqi insurgency.

Despite vast networks of people with varying skills and levels of leadership, the Iraqi insurgency was a truly disjointed effort throughout most of 2003 and into 2004. Nascent organizations lacked coherence and capability and individual members moved in and out of groups frequently. Competition within groups and among individuals subverted cooperation among organizations. This occurred despite the fact that this unorganized mass of insurgent forces was simultaneously imposing serious losses on counterinsurgent forces and disrupting the

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<sup>836</sup> Hammes, Thomas X., “Countering Evolved Insurgent Networks,” *Military Review*, July-August 2006.

<sup>837</sup> Hassan, Hussein D., *Iraq: Tribal Structure, Social, and Political Activities*, CRS Report for Congress, 15 March 2007, p. 2.

<sup>838</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3.



formation of a new Iraqi government. Early attempts at cooperation usually took the form of disastrous mass attacks that caused Coalition casualties but came at a pyrrhic costs. The power of networked cooperation did not reveal itself until later in 2003 and early 2004 and then only partially.

Cooperative efforts were blunted through mid-2004 by organizational disunity stemming from internal debates regarding differing organizational goals and interests. General disagreement among organizations on political and ideological goals and even tactical methods and targets were a common feature of the insurgency throughout most of 2004. “Sunni dissatisfaction and the insurgent perception that they could attain military success contributed to the slow progress of counterinsurgency in Iraq in 2004.”<sup>839</sup> Notwithstanding intra-group disagreements and divisions and an almost complete disregard for what a successful insurgency would require of the victors, the insurgency did manage to develop cooperative methods by late 2004 based on tactical realities and organizational needs. As Hashim then noted, “the insurgency is not a united movement directed by a leadership with a single ideological vision. Indeed, the insurgents may have calculated that their success does not now require an elaborate political and socioeconomic vision of a ‘free’ Iraq; articulating the desire to be free of foreign occupation has sufficed to win popular support. Because they wish to avoid fratricidal conflict, these groups are cooperating with one another and coordinating attacks at the operational and tactical levels despite profound political differences.”<sup>840</sup> Intermittent success against the counterinsurgency

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<sup>839</sup> Malkasian, Carter, “The Role of Perceptions and Political Reform in Counterinsurgency: The Case of Western Iraq, 2004-05,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Volume 17, Issue 3, September 2006, p. 389.

<sup>840</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., “Iraq’s Chaos: Why the Insurgency Won’t Go Away,” *Boston Review*, October/November 2004.

throughout late-2004 and early-2005, based on cooperatively planned and networked attacks, provoked greater cooperation among organizations despite competing organizational objectives and goals.

Regardless of the initial ad hoc construction and motivation of the Iraqi insurgency the effort became increasingly better organized through successful tactical and operational cooperation. With cooperation came sophistication and organizational articulation.<sup>841</sup> By late 2005 and early 2006, the insurgency was based on more permanent, though shifting and evolving, networks premised on competency and a capacity for augmenting external operations. Correspondingly, recognizable and geographically bound groups emerged based on shared interests, fitness, and local affiliations.<sup>842</sup> Informal divisions of labor also evolved within and across a number of formerly competing groups.<sup>843</sup> Among insurgent organizations, there was an “increase in sustained cooperation and coordination in training, resource-sharing and the conduct of joint operations.”<sup>844</sup> There was also collaboration for specific missions based on interests in attacking the same targets.<sup>845</sup> The insurgency was self-sustaining and actualizing; it had its own

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<sup>841</sup> Schnaubelt, Christopher M., “Wither the RMA,” *Parameters*, Autumn, 2007, p. 102. See also, Middle East Report No. 50, *In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency*, International Crisis Group, February, 2006, p. 8, “Progressively, as a result of fierce competition, smaller, less effective groups disappeared or merged with more successful, well-established and prestigious ones...by 2005, what had begun as an assortment of isolated cells thus became a set of far wider and sophisticated networks.”

<sup>842</sup> Guidere, Mathiew and Peter Harling, *Op Cit*.

<sup>843</sup> International Crisis Group, *Op Cit*, p. 8.

<sup>844</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 187.

<sup>845</sup> *Ibid*.

experiential gravity: “Friendships, webs of acquaintance and networks of mutual obligation stretch worldwide between and among groups. Similarly, within *jihad* theaters, groups cooperate and develop bonds of shared experience and mutual obligation.”<sup>846</sup> Organizational coordination developed and collective learning about insurgent and counterinsurgent methods ensued.<sup>847</sup> This extended through native groups and to the foreign elements of the insurgency.

Cooperation in Iraq among foreigners, particularly al Qaeda, and Iraqi insurgent organizations was “borne of opportunism and a narrow mutual interest in targeting coalition forces.”<sup>848</sup> Although al Qaeda had its own operational interests in Iraq, it provided organizational expertise, resources, and consultation to native groups in exchange for sanctuary, mostly among Sunni tribes and populations in the al Anbar province:<sup>849</sup>

*“The insurgency received extensive support from the transnational network of al Qaeda and associated movements and organizations as well as the external regime of Saddam Hussein that resides primarily in Damascus and elsewhere as well. So, they were able to establish bases of support within the country. Al Anbar was a base of support. North along the Tigris and Diyala rivers in the Diyala Province, South of Baghdad and the use of the Lutifiyah area. All these*

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<sup>846</sup> Kilcullen, David, “Countering Global Insurgency, Version 2.2,” Small Wars Journal, 30 November 2004, p. 10.

<sup>847</sup> International Crisis Group, Op Cit, p. 3.

<sup>848</sup> Levitt, Matthew, “Untangling the Terror Web: Identifying and Counteracting the Phenomenon of Crossover Between Terrorist Groups,” SAIS Review, Volume XXIV, Number 1, Winter-Spring 2004, p. 43.

<sup>849</sup> Fishel, John T. and Max G Manwaring, Op Cit, pp. 261-262.

*were safe havens that allowed the enemy to mobilize resources and access support (weapons, finance, munitions, assemble car bombs, those sorts of things). ”*<sup>850</sup>

Cooperation among al Qaeda inspired and linked organizations (especially those formed or supported by Abu Musab al Zarqawi) was initially based on mutual interest and the potential sharing of resources. “For al-Qa’ida, the merger with Zarqawi proved to be a lifeline. Al-Qa’ida was essentially gaining a franchise in the hub of global jihad at a time when the organization was weak around the world.”<sup>851</sup> For Zarqawi, “the merger also had many benefits. Afterward, he obtained access to both al-Qa-ida’s recruiting networks and, perhaps more important, received financial and logistical assistance, particularly from the Persian Gulf.”<sup>852</sup> Sunni organizations also benefitted from Zarqawi’s largess and appeal. But, generally, and despite notable successes against Coalition forces, Zarqawi’s methods were not well tolerated and his organization lacked support from the Iraqis, even though he was capable of attracting foreign fighters and resources.<sup>853</sup>

Although Zarqawi’s organization provided vast resources and expanded organizational capacity to associated groups, its ruthlessness also sowed division among once and newly cooperating organizations. Notwithstanding mutual interests, Sunni groups allied with Zarqawi

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<sup>850</sup> Brigadier General McMaster, H.R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008.

<sup>851</sup> Byman, Daniel, *The Five Front War: The Better way to Fight Global Jihad*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, 2008, p. 226.

<sup>852</sup> *Ibid*, p. 227.

<sup>853</sup> Beehner, Lionel, “Iraq’s Insurgency After Zarqawi,” Council on Foreign Relations, 9 June 2006.

became disaffected and “antagonized by the increasingly arrogant behavior of Al-Qaida fighters brandishing their pseudo-Islamic authority.”<sup>854</sup> Cooperation was increasingly difficult to achieve because organizational objectives and attitudes collided. “Al-Qaeda is an ideology-based, global movement whose paramount objectives are to mobilize Muslims for a worldwide jihad against the West and to topple ‘apostate’ regimes. Its ideology is profoundly internationalist, attempting to contextualize local conflicts as part of the broader struggle.”<sup>855</sup> Cooperating Sunni groups’ perceptions of the conflict significantly differed: they saw their participation in the Iraqi insurgency not as a part of an international effort but instead as part of a local, Iraqi struggle. “The vast majority of militants in Iraq have nothing to do with al-Qa’ida, and they are focused on Iraqi problems: security, distribution of power and money, and sectarianism.”<sup>856</sup>

Increasing tensions among local and foreign insurgent groups led to a fierce and violent competition for the insurgency’s leadership mantle, the creation of consolidated organizations, and the eventual disintegration of cooperation between and among al Qaeda created and affiliated groups and most native Iraqi organizations (al Qaeda forced one of the 1920 Revolution Brigades (Jaffar al-Tayyar Brigade) to officially join its ranks and conspicuously formed the MSC to consolidate like-minded groups).<sup>857</sup> “Al-Qaeda didn’t understand the Iraqi

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<sup>854</sup> Kohlman, Evan F., Op Cit, p. 9.

<sup>855</sup> RAND, U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy Must Address Ideological and Political Factors at the Global and Local Levels, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006.

<sup>856</sup> Felter, Joseph and Brian Fishman, Al-Qa’ida’s Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, 2008, p. 6.

<sup>857</sup> NEFA, “Statement from the 1920 Revolution Brigades,” 10 October 2007. For an in depth discussion of the formation of the MSC and al Qaeda’s proclamations surrounding it, see, Abedin, Mahan, “Mujahideen Shura Council in Iraq: Fact or Fiction?,” Terrorism Focus, Volume III, Issue 12, 28 March 2006, p. 3. See also, Zambelis,

mentality and tried to lead the community by establishing the Islamic State of Iraq, instead of coexisting with the different Iraqi groups. The targeting of Shiites and their shrines aggravated the Sunni Iraqis as much as it did the Shiites because it upset the precarious balance between the Sunnis and Shiites.”<sup>858</sup> AQI also began targeting competing and dissenting organizations<sup>859</sup> with bloody attacks on tribal leaders throughout al Anbar province and Shi’a targets throughout Iraq.<sup>860</sup> Al Qaeda’s machinations only backfired. “In the end, only two significant Iraqi insurgent factions ever consented to join the MSC: the Army of the Victorious Sect (joined January 15, 2006) and the Army of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jammah (Joined January 28, 2006).”<sup>861</sup>

The effects of al Qaeda’s eventual failure and inability to cooperate along the lines of shared goals, or even in the organization’s own interest, extended throughout Iraq (with the emergence of the tribes and local citizens opposing al Qaeda)<sup>862</sup> and will likely be enduring: “Despite the possibility for transnational jihadist cooperation with other insurgent groups, it is likely that their extremist beliefs and methods will continue to set them apart from other insurgent groups, and make the prospect of long-term cooperation between these groups

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Chris, “Iraqi Insurgent Media Campaign Targets American Audiences,” *Terrorism Focus*, Volume IV, Issue 33, 16 October 2007, p. 3.

<sup>858</sup> Bakier, Abdul, “Al-Qaeda Adapts its Methods in Iraq as Part of a Global Strategy,” *The Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor*, Volume V, Issue 24, 20 December 2007, p. 6.

<sup>859</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>860</sup> See, Robinson, Glenn E., “The Battle for Iraq: Islamic Insurgencies in Comparative Perspective,” *Third World Quarterly*, Volume 28, Number 2, 2007, p. 272.

<sup>861</sup> Kohlman, Evan F., *Op Cit*, p. 3.

<sup>862</sup> See, Petraeus, David H., *Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq*, 10-11 September 2007, p. 5.

unlikely.”<sup>863</sup> Al Qaeda’s behavior also made it abundantly clear that cooperation based on a lone intersecting organizational objective did not necessarily translate into the successful recognition of organizational goals.

#### **7.4.4 External Assistance Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- External consultation with organizations (particularly states and their functionaries) that did not have ties to individuals and groups in Iraq was limited. The variety of capabilities and resources brought to bear by manifold organizations participating in the insurgency allowed for significant inter-organizational consultation. Thus, insurgent organizations were not subject to the controls and whims of external powers and were able to make decisions and engage in acts based on internal organizational interests.
- Individual actors, external but indigenous Iraqi organizations, criminal groups, and foreign organizations all contributed to the Iraqi insurgency even if the effects of their actions were only tangentially or indirectly tied to the goals of insurgent organizations. The chaotic environment prevailing in Iraq permitted various activities that expanded the effects of the insurgency (crime, looting, revenge killings, etc.) and significantly disrupted counterinsurgent efforts. Direct action on behalf of or benefitting insurgent organizations slowed the counterinsurgent adaptive cycle and allowed committed insurgent organizations the time and space to adjust organizational inputs and outputs with more discretion.

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<sup>863</sup> Steliga, Mark A., Op Cit, p. 68.

- Insurgent groups (tribes, FREs, foreign groups, various militias, and criminal organizations) cooperated when their goals aligned and when mutual benefits could be realized. But while the diverse nature of the insurgency provided opportunities for cooperation, it also ensured organizational disunity as differing organizational goals and interests came into conflict. Disunity led to friction and ultimately disrupted cross-organizational capacities for adapting resources to organizational goals. Competition for goal achievement caused a rationing of organizational capital.

## **7.5 CRITICAL GROUP PROCESSES**

### **7.5.1 Application of Skills & Knowledge**

The insurgency's skill and knowledge was derived from previous martial training and education and, as the conflict progressed, built upon on shared information and the experiences gleaned from operations. Experiences from the Soviet-Afghan war, the conflict in Chechnya, the Iran-Iraq war, and the more recent war in Afghanistan, all contributed to insurgent knowledge and skills. Increasingly, these skills were enhanced by operations in Iraq.<sup>864</sup> The manifestation of

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<sup>864</sup> The insurgency expanded its knowledge and skills through printed materials from other conflicts, military manuals, and experimentation. For instance, insurgents began using 'sticky' or magnetic IEDs for targeted assassinations in late 2004 or early 2005. These were likely derived from a combination of Limpet mines from WWII and magnetic booby traps used in Northern Ireland. For discussion see, Londono, Ernesto, "Iraq Militants Turning to Use of 'Sticky' Bombs," Washington Post, 10 October 2008 and Zoepf, Katherine and Mudhafer Al-Husaini, "Militants Turn to Small Bombs in Iraq Attacks," New York Times, 13 November 2008.



the insurgency's skills and knowledge appeared as unsophisticated yet creative responses to counterinsurgent behavior. In response to the counterinsurgency, the insurgency was uncannily parsimonious and capable of combining skills, knowledge, and resources in application:

*“The insurgency’s level of desperation and their lack of technology was striking. They used the least sophisticated method to arrive at the same endstate: blow up a U.S. vehicle. They would hide IEDs in dead animals, flower pots, etc. It was so simple yet so difficult to track. These people had, and we found, anarchist cookbooks, and stuff like that. You had to have a good memory of where things were along routes. It could be a new flower pot or it could be a new IED. If you put a dead animal on the road we assume that someone hit the dog. Nobody thinks that someone put an IED in the dog. One, it would be ignored. Two, it was disgusting and nobody wanted to look at it.”*<sup>865</sup>

The insurgency was also capable of changing tactics and techniques adaptively to respond to counterinsurgent behavior while still achieving a desired organizational effect:

*“They might not have had the equipment but they made do with what they had and they reacted quickly to how we did things.”*<sup>866</sup>

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<sup>865</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>866</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview, 23 September 2008.

Skills and knowledge were used to quickly modify equipment simply but effectively:

*“Most IEDs are not that sophisticated. Yes, some work with IR [Infra-Red] sensors and such and it does take some skill to learn how to make them well but none are cutting edge technology. Deadly IEDs are the deep buried ones that are artillery shells or homemade explosives and explosively formed projectiles, which are copper slugs that cut through the armor on all of our vehicles.”<sup>867</sup>*

An ability to adapt skills and knowledge sets, however simple, based on experience ensured that the insurgency could effectively counter its competitors rapidly and in concert with organizational goals. Maintaining simplicity enabled speed and also aided the propagation of skill and knowledge sets to other organizations. This is reflected in the tactical vice strategic adaptability of insurgent organizations in Iraq:

*“I think that they had a greater capacity to adapt at the tactical level and at the technical level than they did at the strategic level. You take AQI for instance, if we put armor on our vehicles ,then they built bigger bombs. If we put counter-EW [Electronic Warfare] devices on the vehicles, they used pressure plates. If we used metal detectors to find the pressure plates, they would go to command wire. That kind of adaptation occurred regularly with the insurgents and AQI terrorists in Iraq. What AQI couldn’t do as well was adapt at the strategic level. For instance, once the tribes had begun to turn against AQI in Anbar Province*

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<sup>867</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Crider, James, Email Interview, 22 September 2008.

*because of the way AQI treated the tribal chieftains and the people of Anbar, and brutalized them, AQI was not nimble enough to alter their strategy.”<sup>868</sup>*

### **7.5.2 Task Performance Competency**

To enhance task performance competency, insurgent organizations had to initially invent tasks and training regimens to accomplish their goals. Few native organizations had any experience in planning or conducting insurgent operations. Disparate organizations with inexperienced members suffered from its constituents: not knowing each other very well; having no operational familiarity with one another and; having, perhaps, wildly differing tactical capabilities. Although the detachment and secrecy accompanying insurgent anonymity did help with security it also had “unintended and deleterious consequences.”<sup>869</sup> When insurgents don’t know each other very well or aren’t trained together, solidarity and capability suffer. “Group cohesion among insurgents can be low, particularly between part-timers who come together for a mission or series of missions.”<sup>870</sup> Furthermore, many insurgent tasks required coordination and an implicit knowledge of participating members’ tendencies and skills. These were unknowable in the early stages of the insurgency.

As the conflict progressed and as insurgents gained competency and experiential skill, so too did their competitors. Thus, insurgent organizations had to expand and modify tasks

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<sup>868</sup> Colonel (Ret.) Mansoor, Peter, Telephone Interview. 12 September 2008.

<sup>869</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 193.

<sup>870</sup> Ibid.

continuously in order to accomplish their goals. Insurgent competency increased for a number of reasons.<sup>871</sup>

- Proficiency in task accomplishment (many incompetent insurgents were killed off);
- Organizations with experienced and professional operators joined the insurgency and;
- Established tribal organizations expanded the operational reach and knowledge pool of the insurgency.

Insurgent organizations incorporated experience and knowledge into combinative tactical proficiencies. Simple tactics were blended into complex tasks to achieve organizational goals. Competency was increased by focusing on the perfection of these fairly simple tactical tasks in planning and in training:

*“We learned that the insurgents do the same things that we do. We had video tapes showing that the insurgents rehearse their attacks, film them, and then conduct learning sessions. It is like our squad STX [Squad Training Exercise] for Christ’s sake.”<sup>872</sup>*

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<sup>871</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., “Iraq’s Chaos: Why the Insurgency Won’t Go Away,” Boston Review, October/November 2004. This continuous process is reflected in the competitive evolution taking place between the insurgency and counterinsurgency over IEDs: wire triggered IEDs were countered by eliminating the triggermen; radio signaled IEDs were jammed and; continuous radio signals required active tracking when in contact. Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, pp. 191-192.

<sup>872</sup> Soldier deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad and Ramadi

But the insurgency both benefitted and suffered from small unit tactical proficiency: simple tasks, no matter how well performed, could only accomplish a limited set of organizational goals. Additionally, simple tasks could at some point be predicted and countered, particularly if intelligence indicated the time and place of a likely attack. Even as task performance competency increased, small units armed with a bevy of simple task skills were not capable of achieving more complex organizational goals despite significant adaptation to counterinsurgent methods, tendencies, and tactics. Persistent and deliberate counterinsurgent operations against small insurgent units reduced the effectiveness of the overall organization. Kagan argues that by late 2007, as “continuous operations fragmented the enemy into small groups, the enemy launched fewer complex attacks at longer intervals, with decreasing success.”<sup>873</sup> The smaller the group, whether competent or not, the less robust the effect of its attacks and the less likely that the attack could be synchronized with broader organizational goals.

### **7.5.3 Command, Control, and Communications**

While only parts of the Iraqi insurgency were hierarchical in structure, hierarchical lines of control did exist.<sup>874</sup> What hierarchy was present was mostly insulated from quotidian operations

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(November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>873</sup> Kagan, Kimberly, “Securing Diyala,” The Institute for the Study of War and the Weekly Standard, June 2007—November 2007, p. 22.

<sup>874</sup> Avoiding hierarchical structures or minimizing the appearance of hierarchical lines of control was critical to organizational security and this fact was well understood by insurgent organizations facing the Coalition in Iraq and elsewhere. “[Abu Musab al-Suri’s] life’s work is a 1,600 page opus, ‘The Global Islamic Resistance Call’, which started to take form in the early 1990s. In it, Mr. al-Suri argues that *jihadis* should avoid creating

and busied itself instead with providing guidance to decentralized cells and combatant units. Organizational functions were given definition by leadership but action elements (sub-organizational and contracted cells and small groups) operated without strict managerial constraints. Al Qaeda and affiliated groups maintained some semblance of direct command and control of the organization through recruitment mechanisms, organizational rules, and by procuring and managing organizational resources. Tribal and former regime led organizations similarly retained vestiges of control extending from pre-existing power and command relationships. Other organizations maintained the direction and command of operations farmed out to an almost limitless pool of insurgents through various communicative means and chains of command. Operators were assigned missions, were hired on an as-needed basis, or operated independently as necessary or expedient.

As the insurgency expanded, mostly by the addition of small cells or the incorporation of foreign and local volunteers, it required enhanced management structures to ensure that goal accomplishment was tied to organizational activity and behavior. This was made possible in smaller, cellular organizations by communications technologies linking organizational sub-parts and hierarchical leadership, when and where it existed. Although small cells enhanced overall organizational security and expanded organizational capabilities, maintaining structural command and control with these lower organizational echelons was difficult to accomplish, even with the aid of technology. This problem was compounded when larger organizations contracted support from operators and where local control was divested to local commanders. While

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hierarchical structures, which are vulnerable to attack by local or American security forces, and move instead to a decentralized system of individuals or small local cells linked only by ideology.” The Economist, “The Brains Behind the Bombs,” 3 November 2007.

maintaining a large but loose network expanded organizational capability and was necessary for organizational security it also made unified goal achievement a complicated and difficult endeavor. Despite the capabilities demonstrated by smaller organizations during the conflict, achieving organizational goals still required direction and coordination for coherence. As Holohan argues, networks are in practice hierarchical and networked and therefore, “leadership is still important.”<sup>875</sup>

Internet communications provided the tools necessary for furtive correspondence between leadership and operators in reference to organizational goals and objectives and for organizational command and control before and after operations.<sup>876</sup> Although other electronic communicative devices and methods (disposable cell phones, radios and stations, text messaging, cyber-planning, targeting, encrypted messaging, social networks, word of mouth, etc.) were used by insurgent organizations (particularly during protracted operations), few provided the anonymity, applicability, security, and speed of the internet.<sup>877</sup> Critical information regarding

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<sup>875</sup> Holohan, Anne, *Networks of Democracy*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 2005, p. 53.

<sup>876</sup> See Hoffman, Bruce, *Op Cit*, Jackson, Brian A., et al, *Aptitude for Destruction: Organizational Learning in Terrorist Groups and its Implications for combating Terrorism*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2005, Nichiporuk, Brian, *Alternative Futures and Army Force Planning: Implications for the Future Force Era*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2005, and Santora, Marc and Damien Cave, “Banned Station Beams Voice of Iraq Insurgency,” *New York Times*, 21 January 2007. See also discussion by Brigadier General Mark Kimmet in Smith, Steven Donald, “U.S. Must Network to Defeat al Qaeda, Kimmet Says,” *U.S. Department of Defense, American Forces Press Service News Articles*, 21 February 2006.

<sup>877</sup> For instance, cellular phones, when activated and even when using encryption software, “emit a signal so that base units know where it is and which apparatus it is so that a call to or from it can be quickly routed. This signal serves as a miniature tracking system unknown to the user and reveals the whereabouts of the apparatus at any

successful techniques and organizational information were transmitted via the internet. This capacity obviated innumerable meetings between sources and end users that would have otherwise been required. The internet greatly reduced transmission time (and thus enhanced the timeliness of control measures), was extremely low cost (the organization did not have to manage the infrastructure required for operation), and enabled extra-organizational connections that helped de-conflict operations and plans.<sup>878</sup> The fragmentation and lack of coordination typically attributable to insurgencies was reduced by the use of the internet even though the organization was, for the most part, physically decentralized.<sup>879</sup>

The command and control exercised by a hybrid organization like al Qaeda is an instructive example of how many hybrid insurgent organizations operated. “Al Qaeda operates around a core nucleus of individuals who lead a series of operations, logistics, finance, training, and command cells populated by surrogates and line or foot soldiers”<sup>880</sup> but without a perceptible

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given time.” Van Meter, Karl M., “Terrorists/Liberators: Researching and Dealing with Adversary Social Networks,” *Connections*, Volume 24, Number 3, 2002, p. 72.

<sup>878</sup> Weimann, Gabriel, *Op Cit*, pp. 9-11. Insurgent organizations benefitted from the establishment of various websites: alneda.com; assam.com; almuhracijroun.com, qassam.net and; jihadunspun.net.

<sup>879</sup> For discussion of insurgent fragmentation see, Stoker, Donald, “Six Reasons Insurgencies Lose: A Contrarian View,” *Small Wars Journal*, 2009. See also, Cordesman, Anthony H., *Success or Failure?: Iraq’s Insurgency and Civil Violence and US Strategy, Developments through June 2007*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 9 July 2007.

<sup>880</sup> Bogart III, Adrian T., *Op Cit*, p. 8. Al Qaeda is unique in so far as it can be described as an insurgency in waiting: it maintains structures that it can field to unstable environments to provoke, support, expand an existing insurgency.



leadership structure centrally commanding all of its related cells.<sup>881</sup> Al Qaeda also established specialized councils (consultation, military, and alliance exploitation) to deliberate and provide guidance to disparate cells.<sup>882</sup> To command and control the organization's functions, al Qaeda used the internet to standardize tactics, unify organizational positions and goals, and to recruit new members and organizations.<sup>883</sup>

Absent the internet, insurgent organizations' communications would have been limited to less secure/more detectable devices and methods. Organizational command and control would have suffered for reasons of operational security and many insurgent organizations would have had to expose members and methods in order to better coordinate their actions. But organizational effectiveness required sufficient command and control capabilities. In turn, command and control required either physical or virtual centralization and centralization required the ability to share information and communicate freely. Centralization, command, and control were thus intertwined and each variably influenced effectiveness:

*“Where they had a safe haven, they adopted a centralized organization. Where denied a safe haven they would have to decentralize (making them less effective). Being centralized would allow them to have a better structure for coordination and mobilization of resources and thus be more effective. Once denied a safe haven a key adaptation was to decentralize a) to survive, and b) to operate*

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<sup>881</sup> Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit, p. 18.

<sup>882</sup> Bogart III, Adrian T., Op Cit, p. 9.

<sup>883</sup> International Crisis Group, In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency, International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 50, February, 2006, p. 4. See also, Zambelis, Chris, Op Cit.

*differently so as to still have some kind of effect against the population and against our forces.”<sup>884</sup>*

Physical decentralization, forced by counterinsurgent action or by the population, required the ability to communicate effectively among cells and the larger organization. Thus, command and control (and the capacity for realizing organizational goals in an adaptive fashion) required an ability to centralize operations either physically or through communicative tools like the internet.

#### **7.5.4 Cognition and Behavior**

Insurgent cognition and behavior was shaped by training, experience, and individual and group capacity for interpreting the environment. Unlike the Coalition’s organizations, the insurgency lacked any significantly influential organizational culture. Even as the insurgency grew in size and strength, an insurgent culture was slow to develop because of the frequent and sometimes rapid structural changes besetting insurgent organizations. Furthermore, few insurgent organizations had any significant or enduring martial customs or institutional heritage.<sup>885</sup> Most insurgent operators and organizations were relatively—in comparison to their counterinsurgent competitors—free from the constraining influences of organizational culture. Insurgent cognition and behavior was more closely tied to the learning that occurred during operations

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<sup>884</sup> Brigadier General McMaster, H.R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008.

<sup>885</sup> This is not to say that individuals were not affected or influenced by the culture of pre-existing organizations they belonged to but that insurgent organizations had few entrenched martial characteristics or much of a historical legacy beyond that developed after the 2003 invasion.

against the counterinsurgency and shaped by the training received throughout the campaign. Individual and organizational cognition and capacity for integrating and applying lessons in the face of environmental flux largely determined organizational behavior and subsequent adaptations.<sup>886</sup>

Because insurgent organizations lack organizational legacies and culture they can be either more or less adaptive depending on their level of training, their experiential knowledge, and their ability to interpret environmental changes in relation to organizational goals. “Not every aspect of insurgent behavior is adaptive—adaptation does not and cannot explain all insurgent behavior, and some insurgent traits and behaviors can be nonadaptive.”<sup>887</sup> Free from a baseline of organizational training, martial ethos, and an institutionalized set of problem solving and goal accomplishment skills, insurgent organizations could respond to environmental cues either correctly and competently or randomly and incoherently depending on which cues were received and how they were processed in relation to organizational goals. As White argues, an organization’s fitness for its environment is not static. Fitness is a measure of the organization’s capacity for correctly responding to changes in the environment.<sup>888</sup> In this regard, the absence of organizational culture and historical legacy to shape and influence decision making can be either a constructive or harmful trait depending on whether or not these skills expanded or restricted the organization’s capacity to interpret and respond to the environment.

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<sup>886</sup> See, RAND, *Heads We Win: Improving Cognitive Effectiveness in Counterinsurgency*, RAND, 2007, p.

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<sup>887</sup> White, Jeffrey, *Op Cit*, p. 7.

<sup>888</sup> White, Jeffrey, *Op Cit*.

Any conflict environment can change quickly and can thus render an organization more or less potent depending on the changes that take place. “Networks can rise or fall in terms of fitness depending on changes in the environment and their ability to adapt to those changes.”<sup>889</sup> Cognition and behavior were thus variable individual and organizational traits that could either positively or negatively influence organizational adaptation. An ability to control, manipulate, or correctly understand the environment were key cognitive and behavioral capacities determinative of organizational fitness.

#### **7.5.5 Critical Group Processes Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- Insurgent skills and knowledge were initially derived from membership skills and training but were later expanded by organizational experiences. Skills and knowledge were applied to train and coordinate more complex task sets comprised of fairly simple but synchronized and—more importantly—repeatable organizational skills. This enhanced the rapidity of organizational adaptation and the iterative propagation of skills in harmony with organizational objectives.
- Initially, organizational members did not know each other well and had not conducted organizational tasks together. The pace of competition required consistent and perpetual task modification to achieve organizational goals. Limited by smaller units, insurgency task competency increased over time but had less effect on the achievement of organizational goals as organizations progressively required more complex task accomplishment capacity.

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<sup>889</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

- Hybrid organizations with small operational cells used the internet to coordinate operations and adaptations across and within organizations and to provide command and control guidance and direction. Centralization, either physical or virtual, was required for greater comprehensive organizational effectiveness. When organizations were penetrated or were dislodged from physical locations, the internet was used to centralize command and control virtually.
- Cognition and behavior were variables shaped by organizational and individual abilities to receive, interpret, and incorporate environmental changes. Cognitive capacity and behavioral adaptation were influenced if not determined by environmental changes.

## 7.6 LEARNING

### 7.6.1 Knowledge Collection

Insurgent organizations took great care in collecting information about operations in order to learn and improve their tactics. This was done overtly during operations, covertly through concealed observation, and surreptitiously through penetration of the counterinsurgency:

*“Some of the things that they would come up with were from people working on the FOBs pacing things off or using cameras. They were sneaky about getting onto our FOBs for observation. They knew as well as we did that in a country where there is no personnel tracking and on a FOB where there are, on any given*

*day, 300 people coming to the gate looking for work, it is very difficult to identify one individual that you kicked out.”*<sup>890</sup>

Insurgent groups collected and compiled data (sometimes, with cameramen alongside combatants) that included the date and time of an operation, identification of the insurgents involved, and a record of military deeds:<sup>891</sup> While this information was used for propaganda purposes, its most critical application was in determining best practices and for sharing operational information across the organization:

*“Somehow they video tape and observe what they do. They are trying to figure out what works best.”*<sup>892</sup>

Collected knowledge was used to create visual records that other insurgents could emulate, incorporate into training, or learn from as part of a descriptive vignette. In addition to capturing operational knowledge on video, in short films, or in testimonies, the insurgency created volumes of documentary data that recorded quantitative and qualitative aspects of insurgent operations to include: programmatic texts, inspirational texts, martyr biographies, poetry, operational reports, periodicals, radio broadcasts, biographies, books, recorded

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<sup>890</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>891</sup> International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 50, *In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency*, International Crisis Group, February 2006, p. 20.

<sup>892</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

statements, songs, and analytical statements.<sup>893</sup> Sharing recorded and analyzed data gave other members of the insurgency a template for their own collection and analytical efforts. Precise collection efforts ensured that preparation and successes and failures in application could be understood and incorporated across the insurgency. Collectively, this knowledge formed a corpus of data that, when distributed either by hand or via the internet, enabled timely and relevant organizational learning without the loss of security normally associated with a training event or meeting by a largely clandestine organization.

The ability to learn from collected knowledge allowed the insurgency to “purposefully adapt to ever-evolving circumstances by:

- Developing, improving, and employing new weapons or tactics that can enable it to change its capabilities over time;
- Improving its members’ skills in applying current weapons or tactics;
- Collecting and utilizing the intelligence information needed to mount operations effectively;
- Thwarting countermeasures and improve its chance of surviving attempt to destroy it;
- Preserving the capabilities it has developed even if some of its members are lost.”<sup>894</sup>

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<sup>893</sup> Kimmage, Daniel and Kathleen Ridolfo, “Iraqi Insurgent Media: The War of Images and Ideas,” Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, Washington DC, 2007.

<sup>894</sup> Jackson, Brian A. et al, Op Cit, p. ix.

Since most of the sub-organizations of the Iraqi insurgency had vastly different experiences, levels of training, and operational skills and knowledge, collected knowledge expanded the insurgency's core competency and developed a standardized set of tactics and techniques that could be modified or enhanced for particular operations. Without collected knowledge, the insurgency would have suffered even more egregiously from knowledge gaps, lagged learning, and retarded operational capacity across the organization.

Knowledge collection is critical for a networked organization. Since many of the sub-groups (particularly the smaller elements consisting of less than a dozen members) of an insurgent organization do not openly or regularly meet and might never have the opportunity to discuss operations, successes, and failures, collected knowledge becomes a static (archived) and dynamic (can be altered, added to, or changed) alternative source of learning. When accompanied by oral or written communiqués, critiques, and analysis, this knowledge is converted into operational intelligence. Knowledge collected this way expands learning geometrically as each organization makes inferences from the evidence provided and adapts this knowledge for application to local circumstances. When this secondary application is also recorded, analyzed, and shared, the pool of operational intelligence expands further and becomes a broad dataset for intra-, cross-, and external organizational adaptation detailing both friendly and enemy operations. Although knowledge collection alone cannot replace actual training events and collective AARs in utility, it can supplement organizational learning by providing instructive examples of actual operations. Including critical details of each operation in the knowledge collection process allowed the insurgency to compare and contrast the efficiency and effectiveness of methods and counterinsurgent responses. In the absence of collected knowledge disparate networked insurgent organizations would be cognitively limited and impaired; their



minimalist size, attendant security considerations, and a lack of analytical power would shrink the individual group's erudition set to data gleaned from direct experience and distant inference. Each segment of collected and analyzed operational knowledge set expanded the knowledge pool that various insurgent groups could draw upon when planning and training for an operation.

### **7.6.2 Knowledge Transfer**

Insurgent planners and practitioners alike have to be able to share knowledge within the group and with other groups in order to make even semi-coordinated organizational adaptations. "Even if a group acquires useful knowledge, it must be able to absorb and apply it or it will not learn and its operations will not benefit."<sup>895</sup> Adaptation is premised on knowledge assessment, transfer, implementation, and refined assessment. This process is accelerated when and where knowledge is transferred across groups and geography and is implemented in alternative environments by organizations where critical input and output factors (training, task performance competency, learning, etc.) vary. Combinatorial iterations of transfer and assessment amplify the salience of this process. If an organization cannot fully assess its collective knowledge base and implement alternative options for action premised on this knowledge for the achievement of organizational goals, its adaptations will be at best random and at worst will compromise the organization's coherence and existence. Assessment and adaptation are thus premised on knowledge transfer and successful innovations based on this knowledge.

The tangible representation of transferred knowledge is the spread of innovations. Innovations appear as creative, mimicked, yet uncoordinated responses to the changes in the

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<sup>895</sup> Jackson, Brian A., et al, *Op Cit*, p. 41.

environment that either degrade or enhance the likelihood of achieving organizational goals. When multiple organizations independently sense a change in the environment (a new counterinsurgent tactic, for instance), respond, and then share knowledge of success and failure, this results in further and more informed innovations. A typical IED cell's knowledge transfer procedure is illustrative: "IED cells often exchange information and transfer skills among one another by sharing videos of their respective exploits for training purposes. The IED unit includes several people, from those who procure the raw materials (usually from ammunition dumps), to the bomb-builder, undoubtedly the most technically skilled individual in the cell, who also doubles as training instructor."<sup>896</sup>

Knowledge transfer effectively reduces the number of assumptions that an organization has to make regarding the effectiveness of its actions and responses and enables greater coordination within and among organizations with similar organizational goals and requirements. Devoid a capacity to share knowledge within and across groups, an organization would have to complete several response iterations to collect a similar amount of information relevant to the environment and the organization. Furthermore, the information collected could or would only be analyzed by one organization's members. Therefore any information collected by an individual organization would lack robustness and would be less applicable to the refinement of an organization's adaptive cycle. Hence, the ability to transfer knowledge mitigates a number of networked organization weaknesses: measurement and assessment capacity; the ability to correctly sense, probe, and respond to the environment; the external validity of organizational

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<sup>896</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S. *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 161.

findings and; the number of assumptions made when planning and conducting operations. Organizational innovation and further adaptation is enhanced by knowledge transfer.

Knowledge transfer spurs innovation in at least two ways: overtly (direct communication via personal connections) and passively (stigmergic environmental signals).<sup>897</sup> Robb argues that there is a pattern to this process involving a cycle of innovation, adoption, and propagation.<sup>898</sup> The networked structure of the Iraqi insurgency enabled the organizational independence necessary for making timely and experimental innovations. Additionally, these small and autonomous groups were motivated by survival and goal achievement and were thus intrinsically interested in improving their capabilities. Eisenstadt and White contend that “Smaller groups are more likely to innovate, and their apparent propensity to share expertise and experience (either through face-to-face meetings or over the internet) ensures that innovations are passed on, allowing groups to achieve broader tactical and operational effects than they could on their own.”<sup>899</sup> The tools and relationships necessary for sharing these innovations were omnipresent in Iraq.

Personal, intra-organization, and inter-organizational knowledge transfer was abetted by a variety of procedures and enablers available to most if not all Iraqi insurgent organizations. The insurgency adopted media techniques from al Qaeda’s various internationally affiliated groups to support daily press releases, distribute printed materials, and offer various videos for

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<sup>897</sup> Robb, John, Epidemic Insurgency (Part 1), 17 November 2004, [http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/globalguerrillas/2004/11/epidemic\\_insurg.html](http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/globalguerrillas/2004/11/epidemic_insurg.html).

<sup>898</sup> Ibid.

<sup>899</sup> Eisenstadt, Michael and Jeffrey White, Op Cit, p. 22.

download in a number of languages (German, English, Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish).<sup>900</sup> Insurgent organizations were also adept at confounding attempts to shut down their knowledge transfer activities. Content from disbanded websites was archived and presented on new websites, free uploads and downloads were made available, and compressed film files were developed for mobile phone transfer and viewing.<sup>901</sup> Insurgent organizations developed and spread knowledge regarding tactical techniques and procedures via instructional articles, manuals, video films, books, PowerPoint presentations and Portable Document Format (PDF) newspapers.<sup>902</sup> Weaponry, assassination techniques, and poison and explosives manufacturing were among a few of the subjects disseminated. Websites were also used to announce policy positions, alliance formations, strategic shifts, breaking news, and to comment on Western media.<sup>903</sup> Although intergroup personal contacts were likely the easiest and most used knowledge transfer methods, according to Kilcullen, "Terrorist and insurgent groups worldwide can access a body of techniques, doctrine and procedures that exists in hard copy, and on the Internet, primarily in Arabic but also in other languages."<sup>904</sup> Provincial, regional, and international components of knowledge transfer also enabled the insurgency, "The Internet and

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<sup>900</sup> Kimmage, Daniel and Kathleen Ridolfo, Op Cit.

<sup>901</sup> Ibid.

<sup>902</sup> See for discussion, International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 50, *In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency*, International Crisis Group, February, 2006, p. 8.

<sup>903</sup> The Economist, "A World Wide Web of Terror," 14 July 2007 and International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 50, *In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency*, International Crisis Group, February 2006, p. 15.

<sup>904</sup> Kilcullen, David, "Countering Global Insurgency, Version 2.2," *Small Wars Journal*, 30 November 2004, p. 12.

infiltration from other nations gives them [insurgents] knowledge of what tactics work from other areas.”<sup>905</sup>

Environments that allow the free association of insurgent members also significantly increase the likelihood of knowledge transfer. This can occur in geographical areas controlled by the insurgency, in uninterrupted chat rooms or on blogs, or when insurgents are detained and confined together. Prisons and holding areas accelerate knowledge transfer by bringing together disparate actors for what can be long periods. Insurgents housed together in prison can: create relationships with other insurgents from diverse geographical areas and backgrounds; transfer knowledge of successful tactics and techniques; jointly recruit to expand the organization; conduct training and; pass information and guidance back and forth between leadership and associated members.<sup>906</sup> Upon release from prison or when geographically relocated, insurgents can either rejoin their former organization, return to insurgent activities with expanded tactical knowledge, liaise with other organizations, or create broader partnerships with other insurgent groups.<sup>907</sup>

The localized nature of insurgent organizations also contributed to knowledge transfer within and across organizations and through population-based channels of communication. Friendly populations, family members, and affiliates all contributed to the collection and then transfer of knowledge to insurgent organizations. When the environment changed and if no

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<sup>905</sup> Cordesman, Anthony H., “The Iraq War and Lessons for Counterinsurgency,” CSIS, 16 March 2006, p. 9.

<sup>906</sup> Teamey, Kyle B., “Arresting Insurgency,” Joint Force Quarterly, Issue 47, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, 2007, p. 119.

<sup>907</sup> Ibid.

insurgent organization or only one organization directly perceived this change, the population indirectly supplied evidence and descriptions of the change that took place:

*“The insurgents are adaptive. When they shot at us with AK-47s, we returned fire with 25 mm rounds that were explosive. They didn’t like that action at all and they learned not to shoot at us. People were watching and I am sure that our response was spread around to other people.”<sup>908</sup>*

Most insurgent groups were indigenous to Iraq, did not leave the country for any reason, and in many cases had strong local knowledge and connections to the population even when operating outside of their home neighborhoods. Where knowledge collection and transfer might have been difficult because organization members were interdicted, killed, or captured, and where collection and dissemination methods were problematical or impossible to employ, friendly locals collectively acted as a knowledge repository and transfer mechanism.

### **7.6.3 Knowledge Integration**

Insurgent organizations collected operational and organizational information and actively integrated it into published manuals, pamphlets, and electronic media that were later used to modify organizational behavior and inputs to the organization’s adaptive processes. This process occurred formally and informally as circumstance and speed permitted. “The insurgents have

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<sup>908</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

produced copious internet documentation in which they assess past mistakes, evaluate their opponents' weaknesses and formulate practical operational recommendations. While none of the major groups has publicised its strategy in detail, a military doctrine of sorts emerges from more informal internet chats and exchanges regarding specific military methods or lessons learned from particular armed confrontations.”<sup>909</sup>

Integrating knowledge was important for organizational adaptation in a number of key respects: a group's structure, if sufficiently variable or frequently disrupted, could dislocate or retard organizational memory;<sup>910</sup> inexperienced newcomers could be taught lessons that most organizational members took for granted; change to organizational inputs and outputs could be progressive instead of random and; integration ensured that if sections of the organization were compromised or disabled, the rest of the organization could effectively carry on. Organizations that took advantage of integrating knowledge collected by its members and by other organizations were capable of adapting more quickly and appropriately than organizations that failed to incorporate hard won lessons. Knowledge integration is critical to organizations with rapid turnover. This is particularly true for organizations that are smaller, networked, and rely on mutual lesson, risk, and capability sharing for organizational goal accomplishment. For example, although al Qaeda was capable of refilling its membership quickly, its new members, lacking experience and the knowledge learned by previous fighters, were less disciplined and

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<sup>909</sup> International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 50, *In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency*, International Crisis Group, February 2006, p. 23.

<sup>910</sup> Jackson, Brian A. et al, *Op Cit*, p. 38.

resorted to less deliberate and more random violence.<sup>911</sup> A failure to integrate knowledge can lead to a failure to learn, an inability to tailor organizational changes to goals, and a general organizational breakdown in the face of a successfully adaptive competitor.

#### **7.6.4 Learning Summary: Effects on Adaptation**

- Knowledge collection was aided by overt collection and recording during operations, covertly through concealed observation, and surreptitiously through the penetration of counterinsurgent and government organizations. Knowledge was collected by various means to shape training and learning upon its later distribution and integration. Collection expanded the adaptive capacity of disparate organizations by creating a record and database of organizational knowledge. The collection of organizational knowledge enabled adaptation based on organizational successes and failures.
- Knowledge transfer is reflected in innovations and the spread of innovations. Transfer was enabled by assorted media: video and audio recordings; print and; internet web pages. Transferring knowledge reduces the number of assumptions that an organization has to make in planning. Weaknesses, such as the inability of small organizations to assess the environment and its own activities, an inability to consistently and correctly respond to environmental changes, and an inability to externally validate conclusions and adaptive changes to organizational inputs and outputs, were reduced by the transfer of knowledge.

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<sup>911</sup> International Crisis Group, "Iraq After the Surge I: The New Sunni Landscape," Middle East Report No.

74, International Crisis Group, 20 April 2008.



- Lessons and knowledge were integrated in informal doctrine and through exchanges of information between and among organizations and their members. Integration offset reduced and short organizational memory and helped shaped adjustments of inputs and outputs coherently across organizations for collective adaptive efforts.

## 7.7 CONCLUSION: THE BROADER EFFECTS OF ADAPTATION

The strength of the insurgency was its ability to operate in small groups aided by diversely capable and motivated membership. Small unit adaptations were frequent and occurred across the Iraqi landscape on a daily basis. Freed from many of the constrictive effects of norms, organizational culture, and bureaucratic inertia, insurgent organizations proceeded with tactical, technical, and organizational experimentation, enhancing individual and group performance for goal achievement, and exploiting the capabilities inherent to small, networked organizations. All of this was accomplished while dodging the incrementalism that plagues more hidebound organizations:<sup>912</sup>

*“The insurgency adapts faster than the Army. I think that they have been doing insurgency operations their entire lives. That is how they fight...They understand*

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<sup>912</sup> Structural and organizational dynamism are common traits of clandestine organizations. Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 154.

*the small group mentality. They might not understand anything else but they understand their groups.”*<sup>913</sup>

But the insurgency's strengths were also its weaknesses. Diversity of membership meant diversity of goals: persistent friction among organizations eventually dismembered the insurgency. Capability did not necessarily translate into results. Adaptation, which is only effective if it is directed toward organizational goals, suffered as unity was replaced by competition and divisiveness. Insurgent organizations began to adapt to each other instead of towards shared organizational goals and external competitors. Intransigence and disagreement over goal accomplishment, diminished resource sharing, and conflicting organizational visions and priorities all slowed and reduced the effectiveness of any effective adaptations that were being made.

Organizational goals and methods diverged so sharply in the later stages of the insurgency as to precipitate a significant break among formerly cooperating organizations. The brutal methods employed by al Qaeda and its affiliates against the Iraqi population and later against former partners, eventually backfired and ended up aiding the Coalition. In 2008, polls showed that “support of suicide bombing and other violent tactics is declining among some Muslim populations; this drop off is partly due to the extreme methods employed by al-Qaeda.”<sup>914</sup> Any insurgency can adapt but without goal harmonization, an insurgency cannot

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<sup>913</sup> Soldier Deployed to Irbil, Kirkuk, and Mosul (March 2003-June 2003) and Baghdad, Ramadi (November 2005-November 2006), Personal Interview, 21 June 2008.

<sup>914</sup> Echevarria, Antulio J., Wars of Ideas and *The War of Ideas*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2008, p. 33. Hashim states that “The insurgency’s foreign element has had a greater

adapt effectively. Resources are squandered, efforts are duplicated as organizations compete, inputs and outputs are adjusted inappropriately, and the adaptive cycle is slowed and corrupted. Even with a wealth of resources and observational perspicacity, irresoluteness and friction among participating organizations can doom a networked insurgency. When goals are in conflict cooperation is in jeopardy, although this is not easy to avoid.

Waging a complex insurgency is a difficult task. Coordination and cooperation must be endemic. Learning must occur continuously or smaller constituent organizations will fall prey to competitors and threat organizations.<sup>915</sup> The use of force and violence must at some point be replaced with more positive methods: engendering fear leads to resentment and the tactics of terrorism have a relatively short half-life.<sup>916</sup> Despite claims to the contrary, the theoretical capabilities attributed to networked organizations do not necessarily obtain in practice. Long-term goal achievement, particularly the defeat of a major military power, requires some level of resource mobilization and coordination as demonstrated by insurgent organizations making strange bedfellows for logistical and operational reasons and engaging in bureaucratic behaviors all too familiar to hierarchical and centralized organizations.<sup>917</sup> “In the broadest terms,

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impact than mere numbers would lead us to believe.” This was true, but for different reasons, in the beginning and in the later stages of the insurgency. See Hashim, Ahmed, “Foreign Involvement in the Iraqi Insurgency,” Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor, Volume II, Issue 16, 12 August 2004, p. 1.

<sup>915</sup> Jones, Douglas D., *Op Cit*, p. 17.

<sup>916</sup> Metz, Steven, *Learning From Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, January 2007, p. 19.

<sup>917</sup> Records were kept on travel arrangements, coordinator details, mercenary logisticians, etc. Some insurgent organizations looked less like a loose network than an under-sized bureaucracy. Resources needed to be mobilized efficiently, even as resource mobilization efforts weakened organizational coherence. See Felter, Joseph

insurgents need five types of resources: 1) manpower; 2) funding; 3) equipment/supplies; 4) sanctuary; and, 5) intelligence. These can be *provided, seized, or created*.”<sup>918</sup> Each step taken toward formalizing methods for resourcing organizations made the insurgency less of a spontaneous and amorphous network and more of a centralized bureaucracy. This was necessary. But to achieve organizational goals comprehensively required coordination capacities beyond the reach of disparate, small, and increasingly competitive networked organizations.

If the primary objective of the insurgency was terror, chaos, and the disruption of the counterinsurgency then the insurgency succeeded for nearly 5 years. Two objectives of terror campaigns, which significant portions of the insurgency engaged in for quite some time, are creating chaotic conditions and intimidating the population.<sup>919</sup> But outside of creating chaos and terror, the insurgency accomplished few, if any, positive goals. Thus, organizations and cooperation were unsustainable if their goals extended beyond sowing mass disruption.

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and Brian Fishman, “Al-Qa-ida’s Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records,” Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, NY, 2008, pp. 24-26 and RAND, Getting Inside the Terrorist Mind, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, pp. 1-2. McMaster contends that “People talk about them [the insurgency] as amorphous organizations but they still need to mobilize resources, they still need access to external support.” Brigadier General McMaster, H.R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008. See also, Dillon, Dana, “The Civilian Side of the War on Terror,” Policy Review, October & November 2007.

<sup>918</sup> Metz, Steven and Raymond Millen, Insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan: Change and Continuity, Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2004, p. 3.

<sup>919</sup> Buchanan, William J. and Robert A. Hyatt, Capitalizing on Guerrilla Vulnerabilities, Military Review, August, 1968, p. 7.

*“Eventually, if a networked terrorist organization like we saw in Iraq wants to prevail they have to coalesce into larger formations and actually do more than just fight but govern as well.”*<sup>920</sup>

Almost all the adaptive qualities of the insurgency suffered or faded as the conflict progressed and few positive goals were achieved. An ability to blend into the environment, membership replacement and recruitment, cohesiveness and cooperation, and defensive and offensive capacities were all weakened.<sup>921</sup> Correspondingly, organizational weaknesses were exacerbated. Competition (for resources, loyalty, and control of the population) increased, connectivity (relationships and ties among members and organizations) decreased, the need to surface (to carry out actions overtly) increased, inadaptability (due to a lack of organizational capacity as networks broke down) increased, contradictions (organizational differences) heightened, and self-interest (inability or disinterest in cooperation) became supreme.<sup>922</sup>

Organizational coherence broke down as some groups tried to attain positive goals while others continued to sow chaos; tasks no longer matched objectives, inputs and outputs were adjusted inappropriately, and adaptability was impeded. Being decentralized and networked is really only effective in the short-term and if minimalist organizational goals are sought. As Hashim points out, “I believe that journalists and observers used the term [decentralized and networked] because it sounded ‘sexy’ and because being ‘decentralized and networked’ seemed to be *de rigueur* for terrorist or insurgent groups. The reality is that you simply cannot be a

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<sup>920</sup> Colonel (Ret.) Mansoor, Peter, Telephone Interview, 12 September 2008.

<sup>921</sup> For a discussion of characteristics benefitting insurgencies see, White, Jeffrey, Op Cit, pp. 12-13.

<sup>922</sup> For a discussion of weaknesses see, Ibid, p. 14.

wholly decentralized insurgent group and continue to exist for long or be able to carry out more than very limited operations in a limited geographical locale.”<sup>923</sup>

Like their counterinsurgent competitors, the insurgency had to be able to translate success in combat into political success in order to ultimately achieve its goals. Jackson’s discussion of terrorist group decision making is edifying in this regard: “For some terrorist groups that are simply seeking to produce destabilization or chaos, nearly any outcome of a terrorist attack may suffice. However, for groups with more subtle agendas, it may be difficult to anticipate whether a given attack or other action will be beneficial and whether or not it is may depend on the reactions of others or on events that are outside the group’s direct control. As a result, the history of terrorism is replete with choices made by groups that believed at the time that the choice would be advantageous but, with more complete information and the benefit of hindsight, that proved to be ill-advised. In many cases, actions undermining rather than advancing a group’s interests are driven by the response to the action, either alienating sympathetic populations...or catalyzing action by the group’s direct opponents that hurt it over the longer term.”<sup>924</sup> Furthermore, not all insurgent groups or other similarly violent networked organizations “are equally gifted in terms of their ability to translate operational success in battle

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<sup>923</sup> Hashim, Ahmed S., *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2006, p. 154.

<sup>924</sup> Jackson, Brian A., “Organizational Decisionmaking by Terrorist Groups,” *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*, Eds. Davis, Paul K. and Kim Cragin, RAND, Santa Monica, 2009, p. 226.

into political success.”<sup>925</sup> In fact, the more networked and complex an organization is, then the more difficulties it will have synchronizing competing organizational goals and objectives. Unless the network is homogeneous, which the Iraqi insurgency was not, organizational friction is bound to erupt and can be exploited either by competing internal or external organizations. Organizational adaptation requires the appropriate adjustment of organizational inputs and outputs to achieve organizational goals. When organizational goal accomplishment is subordinated to fractious infighting and internecine competition, the capacity for adaptation is irrevocably slowed and weakened. This was the fate of the insurgency in Iraq. Although the insurgency might still exist in function and perhaps somewhat in form, its capacity for adaptation and even survival has diminished substantially.

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<sup>925</sup> Wirtz, James J., “Politics with Guns,” *Global Insurgency and the Future of Armed Conflict: Debating Fourth-Generation Warfare*, Eds. Terry Terriff, Aaron Karp and Regina Karp, Routledge Global Security Studies, NY, 2008, p. 49.

## 8.0 THE CYCLE OF MUTUAL ADAPTATION AND THE STABILITY OF THE LEGACY

*“Learn and adapt. Continually assess the situation and adjust tactics, policies, and programs as required. Share good ideas. Avoid mental or physical complacency. Never forget that what works in an area today may not work there tomorrow, and that what works in one area may not work in another. Strive to ensure that our units are learning organizations. In counterinsurgency, the side that learns and adapts the fastest gains important advantages.”*<sup>926</sup>—MNF-I Commander’s Counterinsurgency Guidance

The U.S. Army struggled in an iterative adaptive process for years in order to overcome its combat-centric design during OIF. In doing so, the Army had to surmount legacy doctrine, culture, training, and education, while also prevailing against a highly adaptive foe. Success in Iraq required full spectrum capability and not just victories in combat against other uniformed forces.<sup>927</sup> Because of the inappropriateness of the U.S. Army’s design for achieving strategic requirements in Iraq, the Army had to make continuous adaptations to match organizational inputs and outputs to meet its objectives. The simultaneously full spectrum environment of Iraq

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<sup>926</sup> Headquarters, Multi-National Force-Iraq, Multi-National Force-Iraq Commander’s Counterinsurgency Guidance, Baghdad, Iraq, 15 July 2008.

<sup>927</sup> Cordesman, Anthony H., The Iraq War and Lessons for Counterinsurgency, CSIS, 16 March 2006, p. 20.



was almost completely foreign and indecipherable to units on the ground despite the Transformation program's promise of providing unparalleled situational awareness. OIF became "one more illustration of the reality that the 'fog of war' evolves at the same rate as technology and tactics."<sup>928</sup> Power accrued to the organization(s) capable of accomplishing its organizational goals and objectives while in a competitive environment. "The old notion that power is relative to the contingencies for which it is used has been underlined by the contrast between the rapid U.S. victory on the battlefield and the protracted difficulties it has faced in developing adequate responses to the challenges of security, stability, and reconstruction."<sup>929</sup>

The insurgency in Iraq engaged the U.S. Army in a competitive and mutually adaptive process. Both competitors were invested in the adaptive aplomb of their sub-organizations to achieve goals and objectives. Initially, the insurgency possessed a number of strengths: flexibility; few if any bureaucratic obstacles to information flow; strong environmental awareness and; almost limitless supplies of materiel and motivated personnel. On the other hand, the U.S. Army was beset by weaknesses: an inability to scan, recognize, and interpret the environment; planning, equipment, and doctrine completely unsuited to full spectrum operations and; bureaucratic procedures and command relationships that stifled innovation and staunched the flow of information:

*"I have said for a long period of time that one of the reasons that this adversary has been so successful is that he doesn't have all the bureaucratic obstacles in*

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<sup>928</sup> Ibid, p. 16.

<sup>929</sup> Williams, Phil, From the New Middle Ages to a New Dark Age: The Decline of the State and U.S. Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2008, p. 20.

*place to stop the flow of information. We have bureaucratic obstacles that stop the flow of information even to leaders like me. Information that I need for making decisions and could be passed to me almost instantaneously, unlike any other information, is held up because of non-technical bureaucratic obstacles that get in the way.”*<sup>930</sup>

In mid-2003, the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation between the U.S. Army and the insurgency was in disharmony. The tidy, sequential, systematic, and bureaucratic order assumed in plans and doctrine was replaced by chaos, ruthless and uncanny adversaries, unpredictability, and a total breakdown of the norms and rules of formal combat. Initially, the insurgency could adapt faster and was more capable of marshaling resources appropriate for accomplishing its objectives. Conversely, the Army's adaptive pace was slow and sometimes counterproductive and the resources that were available were tailored for a different, narrower type of conflict. Of course, through expansive organizational adaptation, the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation came into harmony but not without the U.S. Army substantially reconfiguring for simultaneous full spectrum operations. Neither failure nor withdrawal were tenable options in this competitive contest. The U.S. Army would have to adapt not only to succeed in Iraq but to demonstrate to future adversaries that it was truly full spectrum capable and that terrorism and insurgency were not templates for victory.<sup>931</sup>

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<sup>930</sup> General Chiarelli, Peter, Telephone Interview, 27 October 2008.

<sup>931</sup> Mansoor, Peter R., *Baghdad at Sunrise*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 2008, p. 341. See also, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations*, Washington DC, October 2008.

Succeeding in Iraq required that the U.S. Army struggle with and fight against its legacy—which persisted and still persists almost 7 years later. As in previous counterinsurgencies, “As insurgent operations became more sophisticated, military responses became more and more inadequate. When insurgents abandoned the hope of military victory, they were less subject to military defeat.”<sup>932</sup> The legacy became less and less useful as OIF proceeded. Although weapons, tactics, and techniques designed for high-end employment in combat were at times of use in Iraq,<sup>933</sup> the cognitive and cultural skills and planning processes associated with these systems and methods proved inadequate. Operations across the full spectrum required soldiers and systems that could rapidly transition from the conventional to the irregular and vice versa in pursuit of the desired political end state.<sup>934</sup>

Interventions are immensely difficult operations and become ever more so when a complex insurgency develops in the aftermath of regular combat; objectives can be elusive and help might never arrive. Responsibility for managing ‘post-conflict’ operations then falls to the organizations, or organization, present. The forces on the ground are responsible for any transition linking tactical success with strategic victory,<sup>935</sup> regardless of the tasks involved, and

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<sup>932</sup> Fauriol, Georges and Andrew Hoehn, “Concluding Comments,” *Latin American Insurgencies*, Ed. Georges Fauriol, NDU Press, Washington DC, 1985, p. 195.

<sup>933</sup> Combat vehicles in particular were useful for transport and supporting operations but they were also highly susceptible to loss from low-tech explosives employed by the insurgency. See, Sloan, Elinor, *Military Transformation and Modern Warfare*, Praeger Security International, Westport, CT, 2008.

<sup>934</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 1-0, *The Army*, June 2005, and Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, October 2008.

<sup>935</sup> Bensabel, Nora, et al, *After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq*, RAND, Santa Monica.

regardless of who is responsible for these operations from an interagency perspective.<sup>936</sup> This requires a full spectrum capability that negates the utility of traditional phased planning templates: the U.S. Army must be capable of conducting a range of operations throughout the course of a campaign or else risk precipitating the collapse and chaos it is trying to avoid. “Thus, we must plant the seeds for effective civil security and civil order *during*, not after, a conflict. The military instrument, with its unique expeditionary capabilities, is the sole U.S. agency with the ability to affect the golden hour *before* the hourglass tips. In other words, the military can take decisive action before security collapses altogether and the civil situation completely deteriorates.”<sup>937</sup> Because the seeds for effective civil security were not planted during the ‘golden hour,’ the U.S. Army was forced to struggle against its physical (in structure) and cognitive (in culture and mindset) legacies to develop a full spectrum capable force able to translate tactical success into strategic and political victory all the while facing a large and rapidly adapting foe. This was no mean task.

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<sup>936</sup> U.S. Army forces were responsible for carrying out functions normally assigned to no less than 7 departments and one agency. The agencies contributing to the U.S. State Department’s Counterinsurgency guide provide a glimpse of the complexity of the counterinsurgency effort: Department of State, Department of Defense, U.S. Agency for International Development, Department of Justice, Department of the Treasury, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Agriculture, Department of Transportation, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. U.S. Department of State, U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide, 2009. NSPD-44 does not force any interagency cooperation in post-conflict operations. Instead, “The Secretaries of State and Defense will integrate stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans when relevant and appropriate.” Bush, George, Bush, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44, The White House, 7 December 2005, p. 5.

<sup>937</sup> Caldwell, William B., and Steven M. Leonard, “Stability Operations: Upshifting the Engine of Change,” *Military Review*, July-August 2008, p. 11.

**Table 2.** Adaptive Accelerations and Decelerations by Phase<sup>938</sup>

		Initial Phase		Initial Adaptive Phase		Adaptive Phase	
		Army	Insurgency	Army	Insurgency	Army	Insurgency
<b>Organizational Context</b>	Accelerate	Robust Communications	Unified Goals	Relaxed Constraints	Information Gathering; Local Support	Training and Experience	Training and Experience
	Decelerate	Inappropriate Goals and Training	Inexperienced Members	Overwhelming Information	Increasing Violence Directed at Civilians	Limited Training Formats	Competing Goals; Local Support
<b>Group Design and Culture</b>	Accelerate	Small Unit Task Organization	Mass Membership; Simplified Tasks	Decreased Controls and Increased Coordination	Diverse Composition; Coordination	Empowered Junior Leaders	Unification
	Decelerate	Combat-Oriented Task Sets	Uncoordinated	Warfighting Norms	Increasing Competition	Restrictive Doctrine	Complicated Task Sets; Norm Breakdown; Limited Membership
<b>Material and Technical Resources</b>	Accelerate	Funding	Access to Equipment	Tailored Communications	Tangible and Intangible Resources	Relaxed Acquisition Controls	Survivability
	Decelerate	Combat-Oriented Equipment; Tight Acquisition Controls	Few Dedicated Assets	Intelligence Gathering and Processing	Increased Attacks without Commensurate Coordination	Planning and Collections Tools	Decreased Intelligence Gathering
<b>External Assistance</b>	Accelerate	Coalition Participation	Inculcation of Trained and/or Experienced Foreigners	Increased Ties to Communities	Uncoordinated but Contributing Actions by Various unaligned Groups	Information Gathering and Joint Patrolling	Enhanced Technical Assistance from Iran
	Decelerate	Little Contact w/ Local Leaders and Population	Limited Material Inputs	Nascent Local Forces	Lack of Cooperation among Major Organizations	Number of Trained Local Forces	Limited Higher Echelon Analysis; Discord with Foreign Fighters
<b>Critical Group Processes</b>	Accelerate	Command and Control at Small Unit Level	Behavior tied to Local Interests	Collaboration across Unit Boundaries	Expanded Competency; Enhanced Communications	Acquiring and Applying Skills	Acquiring and Applying Skills
	Decelerate	Limited Knowledge Sets	Unfamiliar Groups and Uncoordinated Behavior	RFI Process and Procedures	Massed but Limited Effects for Organizational Goals	Formal Task Sets	Inability to Interpret Environment; Poor Coordination
<b>Learning</b>	Accelerate	Experimentation	Overt Collection Capacity	Informal Information Sharing	Informal Doctrine Creation; Integration	Knowledge Integration	Coordinated Training and Knowledge Collection
	Decelerate	Formal Collection and Sharing Requirements and Restrictions	Inability of Small Organizations to Interpret and Incorporate Information	Unit Cycling and Leader Transfer	Volume of Information	Learning and Training Linkages	Environmental Assessment Plagued by Speed of Operations

<sup>938</sup> This table is meant to provide simplified (but not comprehensive) examples of adaptive accelerations and decelerations by phase and by organizational inputs and outputs. The information and processes underlying this table are expanded upon in the following section and figures contained therein.

## 8.1 THE CYCLE OF MUTUAL ADAPTATION

The COE is dynamic. Although conventional forces have always had to adapt in conflict, adaptation usually occurred quickly as similarly equipped and disposed organizations reacted to each other over the period that opposing forces were in contact. Immediate or even lasting changes to organizational inputs and outputs did not necessarily occur nor did they have to for organizations, at least partially or temporarily, to succeed in accomplishing their objectives. This was true because conventional forces, by and large, behaved similarly, were similarly constructed, had similar if opposing objectives, and shared resource strengths that could overwhelm many (but by no means all) organizational faults. While defeat would surely follow the organization that failed to adapt, conventional organizations shared enough strengths and weaknesses that their adaptive cycles were in near natural harmony. The COE on the other hand pits manifold organizational types against each other and thus requires continuous adaptations for organizational success. Disharmony in the adaptive cycles and the resource capacities of the competitors can lead to organizational ineffectiveness, inefficiency, or even defeat. The COE requires significant and rapid coordination of organizational inputs and outputs to achieve organizational goals regardless of organizational type:

*“War is a continuous interaction of opposites in a continuous interaction between your forces and an enemy. An enemy will always adapt to avoid your strengths and attack your vulnerabilities. There are two main things: one is the proliferation of technology and innovative use of technology by our enemies as well as our own forces; another has to do with the application of that technology to be able to communicate more effectively, to organize more effectively, and to*

*coordinate efforts as well as mobilize people and resources in a network dispersed organization.”*<sup>939</sup>

OIF, like many post-Cold War conflicts between conventional and irregular forces but more so, demanded an adaptive capacity of competing organizations. The Cycle of Mutual Adaptation is a process whereby organizations adapt to each other in a continual and cyclic fashion. Success in this cycle requires correctly and quickly modifying organizational inputs and outputs to achieve organizational goals in a rapidly changing environment and against an adaptive foe. The organization that can adapt more rapidly is likely to achieve greater levels of organizational success. When organizations adapt at the same or nearly the same pace, the better resourced organization is likely to achieve greater levels of organizational success. This process is mapped out and analyzed in the next six sections.

### **8.1.1 The Insurgent Adaptation Model**

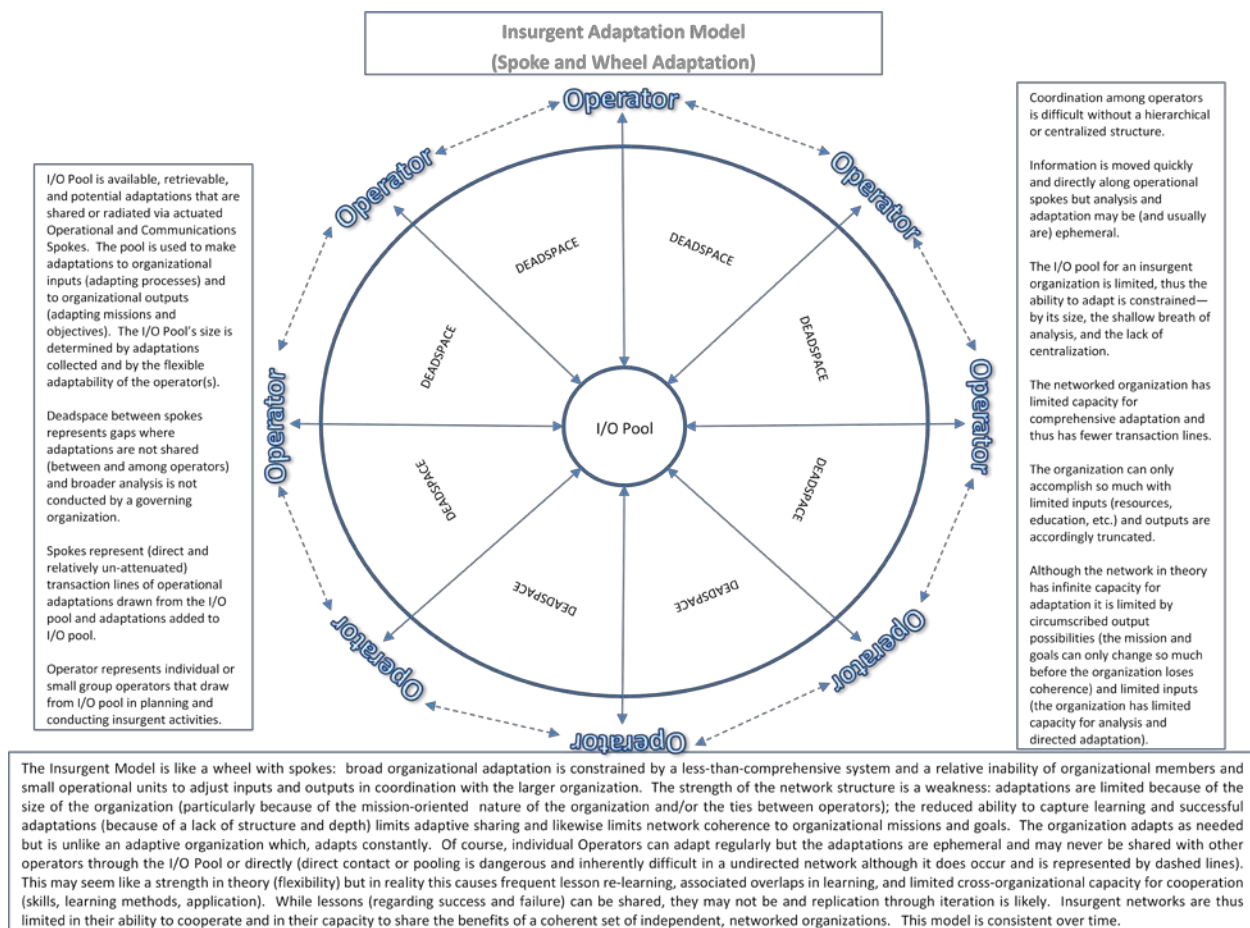
The insurgency in Iraq was simultaneously global, regional, and local and consisted of terrorist, guerrilla, criminal, tribal, foreign, domestic, and other organizations rejecting the order being imposed by the nascent Iraqi government and Coalition forces. This complex insurgency, like modern insurgencies in general, lacked well-defined and easily identifiable centers of gravity, was resilient and adaptive, and was unpredictable.<sup>940</sup> The insurgency was multiform, freed from

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<sup>939</sup> Brigadier General McMaster, H. R., Telephone Interview, 8 September 2008.

<sup>940</sup> Hoehn, Andrew R. et al., New Division of Labor: Meeting America's Security Challenges Beyond Iraq, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2007, p. 15.

bureaucratic barriers, and possessed manifold skills and capabilities. But the insurgency, because of its structure, also had significant weaknesses: competing goals and objectives; fleeting participation; and poor overall coordination. These weaknesses kept the insurgency from becoming a truly adaptive organization; its adaptive capacity did not significantly change over time and its greatest successes came more from the weaknesses of its competitor(s) as they struggled to cyclically adapt than from any inherent or coordinated capability.

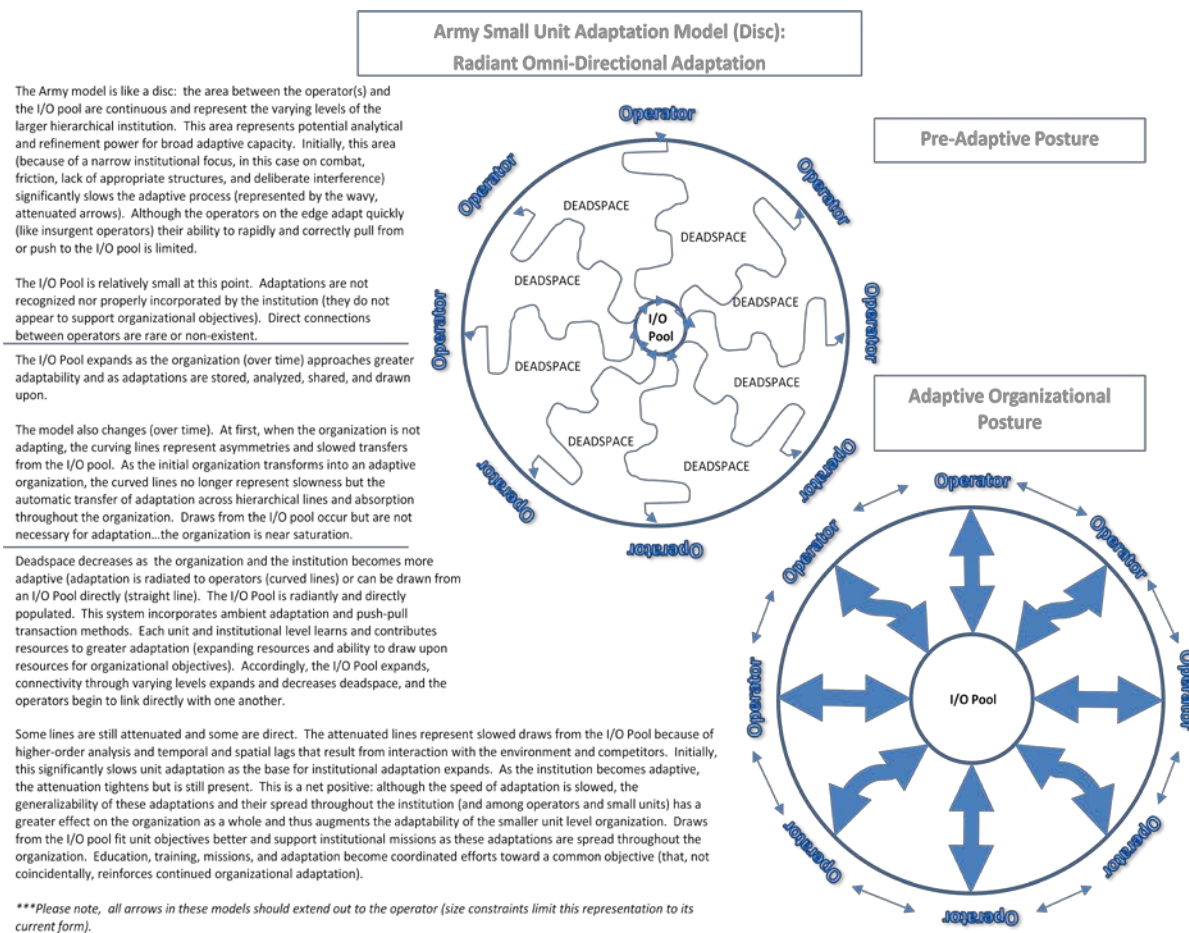


**Figure 3. Insurgent Adaptation Model**



## 8.1.2 Army Small Unit Adaptation Model

U.S. Army organizations proceeded from a pre-adaptive posture early in OIF (where it was decidedly not capable of simultaneous full spectrum operations) to an adaptive organizational posture in late-2006. Correspondingly, the U.S. Army was progressively more capable of making adaptations coherently and efficiently despite its legacy and in spite of its competitor's efforts to disrupt its operations.



**Figure 4.** Army Small Unit Adaptation Model

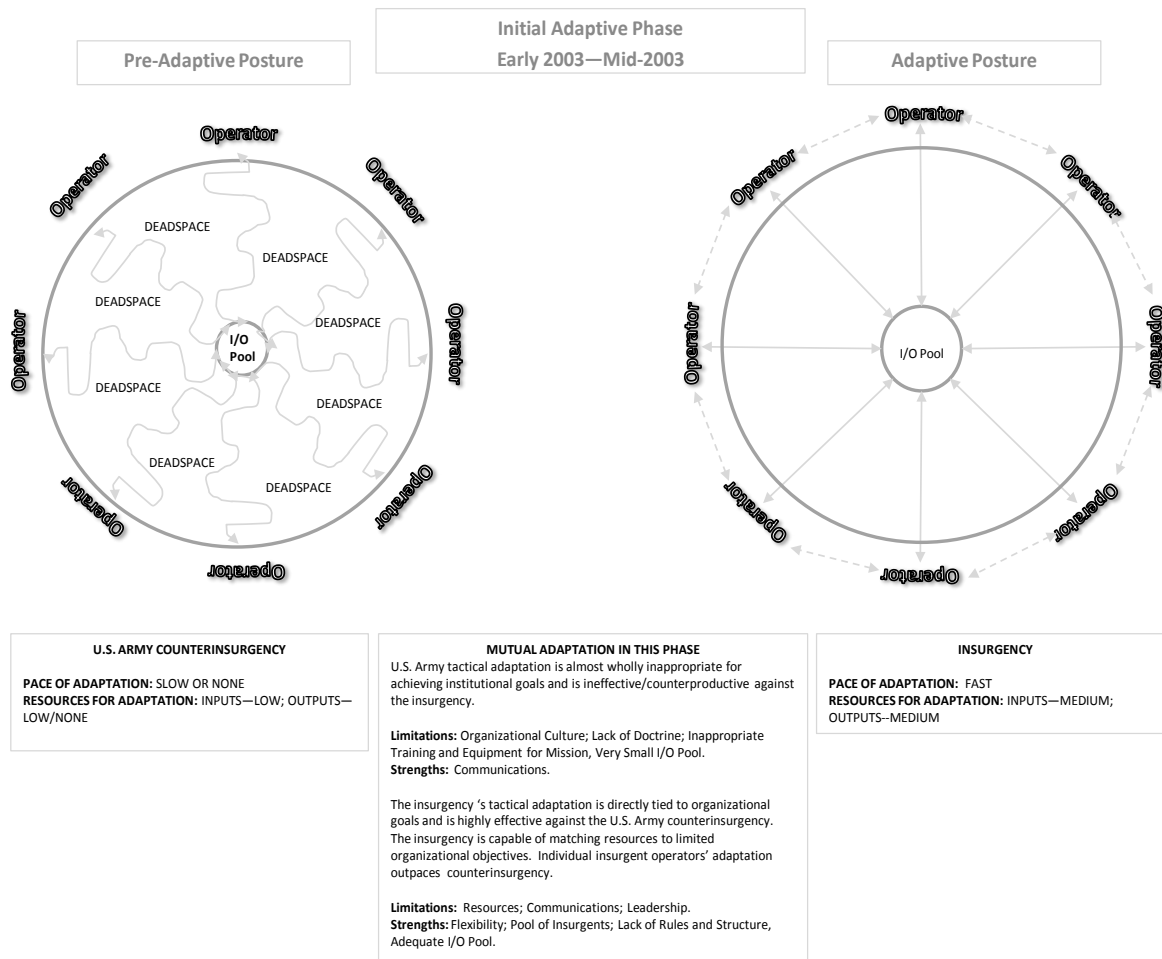
### 8.1.3 The Initial Adaptive Phase

During the Initial Adaptive Phase, the U.S. Army's tactical adaptations were almost wholly inappropriate. The U.S. Army's institutional legacy corrupted organizational attempts to bring adaptations in line with goals and objectives. Superior conventional skills and weapons did not confer traditional advantages.<sup>941</sup> Furthermore, customary approaches built on established patterns were ineffective counters to an adaptive insurgency.<sup>942</sup> Conversely, insurgent organizations, cooperating based on a shared goal of forcing the withdrawal of Coalition forces from Iraq, while at first clumsy, were capable of making organizational adjustments to counterinsurgent forces and towards increasing organizational effectiveness.

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<sup>941</sup> Black, Jeremy, "War and Strategy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," Watch on the West, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Volume 3, Number 4, February 2002.

<sup>942</sup> RAND, Connecting the Dots in Intelligence, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2004, pp. 1-2.



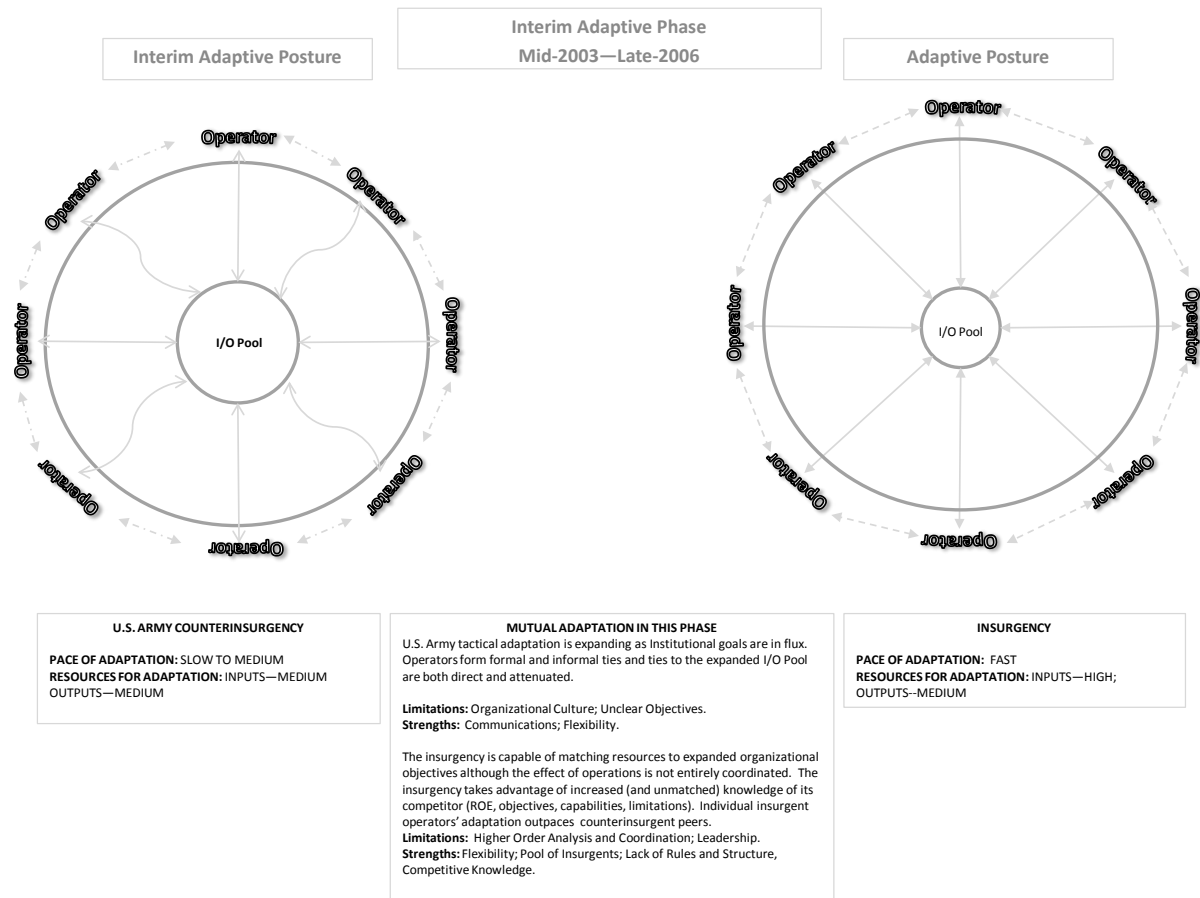
**Figure 5. Initial Adaptation Phase**

#### **8.1.4 The Interim Adaptive Phase**

During the Interim Adaptive Phase, the U.S. Army's tactical organizations began to experiment and innovate, sometimes effectively and sometimes with mixed or undesired results. Differing leadership styles and personalities began to emerge, forcing radical changes throughout the force. Collectively, the U.S. Army began to collect, collate, and incorporate lessons from operations in Iraq into training and MREs. Operations shifted from 'drive-by COIN'<sup>943</sup> to more deliberate Clear, Hold, and Build and presence operations. The insurgency reached its zenith in organizational effectiveness during this phase: resources were well matched with expanding organizational objectives while U.S. Army organizations were still trying to establish organizational goals in light of strategic ambiguity. Only late in 2006 did the insurgency begin to significantly wither from inter-organizational friction. This occurred at about the same time that the U.S. Army was developing a nearly adaptive posture.

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<sup>943</sup> Smith, Niel and Sean McFarland, Op Cit, p. 45.



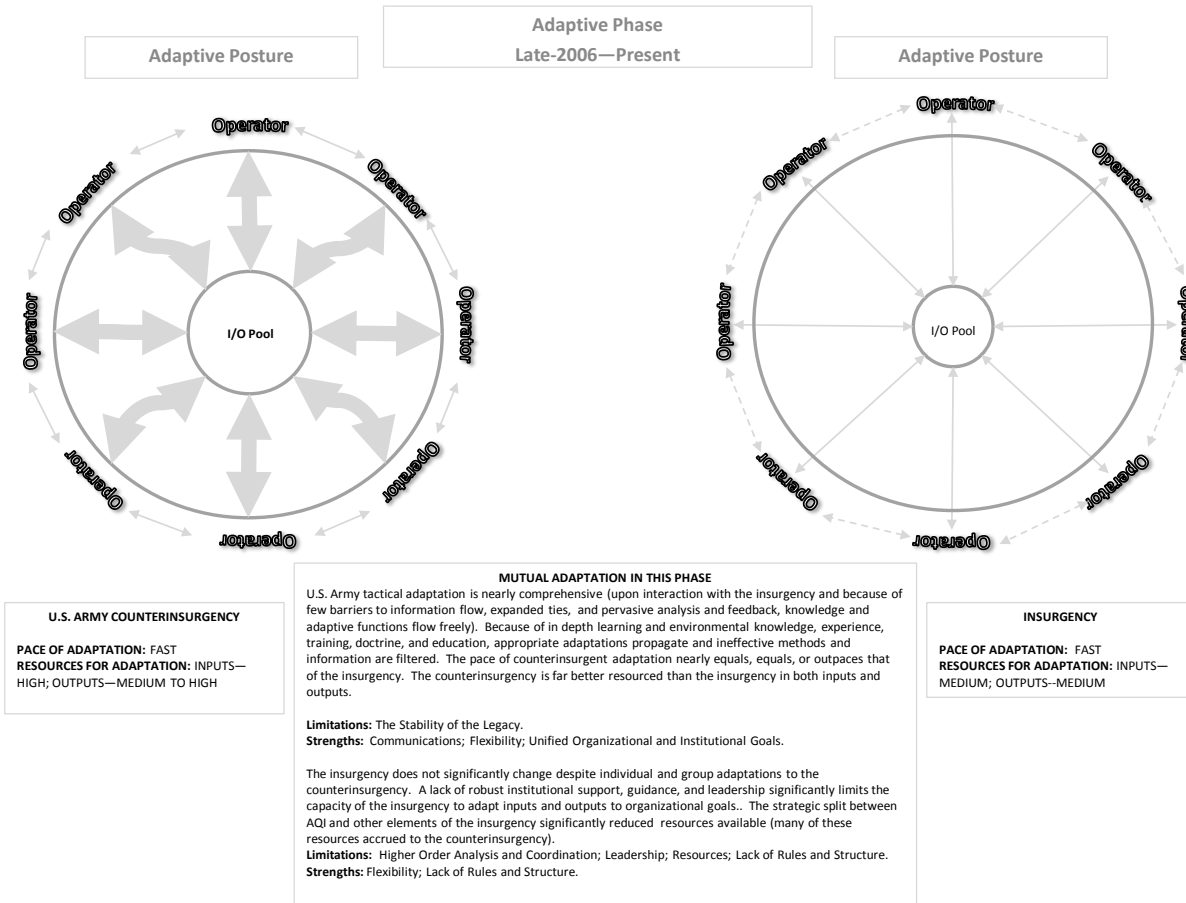
**Figure 6.** Interim Adaptive Phase

### 8.1.5 The Adaptive Phase

In the Adaptive Phase, U.S. Army organizations realized the potential of expanded and mostly unrestricted information flows and the rapid incorporation of lessons and learning into institutional structures. Efficiency and structure were subordinated to effectiveness.<sup>944</sup> The insurgency, meanwhile, suffered from significant organizational friction, dismemberment, and competition. Although it still adapted quickly, its adaptation was not necessarily tied to organizational goals. The Cycle of Mutual Adaptation in Iraq has thus favored the U.S. Army from late 2006 through the present.

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<sup>944</sup> “In management, relaxing assumptions of order means recognizing that not all effective solutions are efficient solutions. It does not mean that trust has to be given blindly or that complex processes cannot be affected; it only means that when the means match the context, less energy need be expended for the same result.” Kurtz, C. F., and D. J. Snowden, *Ibid*, p. 481.



**Figure 7. Adaptive Phase**

### 8.1.6 Accelerating Adaptation

Accelerating effective organizational adaptation, particularly at the tactical level, requires a system that can rapidly translate success into organizational changes while recognizing failures and mitigating their recurrence. Characteristics of such a system include: decentralized decision making, rapid movement, small-unit initiative, informed and imaginative organizational members, the freedom to communicate and operate laterally based on the goals and intent of the organization, and the capacity for open discussions and evaluations regarding organizational and individual effectiveness.<sup>945</sup> Individuals and organizations must be capable of performing manifold tasks and responsibilities in order to adapt to the environment quickly and properly.<sup>946</sup> “In a serious breakdown of order the soldier has to be able to transform from being a security provider, border observer, trainer, secondee staff officer, and intelligence collector into a combat soldier.”<sup>947</sup>

To enhance speed and effectiveness, hierarchical organizations must be prepared to take on the capabilities and structures of networks (i.e., become decentralized) and networked organizations must take on the capabilities and structures of hierarchies (i.e., in resource

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<sup>945</sup> Millet, Allan R. et al, “The Effectiveness of Military Organizations,” *Military Effectiveness Volume I: The First World War*, Eds., Millet, Allan R. and Williamson Murray, Allen & Unwin, Boston, 1988, p. 22. See also, Hammes, Thomas X., *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Zenith Press, 2006, p. 275.

<sup>946</sup> Beckett, Ian F. W., *Insurgency in Iraq: An Historical Perspective*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, January 2005, p. 18.

<sup>947</sup> Mackinlay, John and Alison Al-Baddawy, *Rethinking Counterinsurgency*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, p. 53.



distribution and coordination of effort).<sup>948</sup> Although speed is important in the Cycle of Mutual Adaptation (it keeps competitor organizations off balance) it is not necessarily useful if adaptations made do not advance organizational goals and objectives. Speed is important for organizational pro-activity but the ability to perceive opportunities and weaknesses and accordingly to alter organizational inputs and outputs to achieve organizational goals is paramount. Having coherent goals to align institutional and organizational or organizational and organizational modifications to overall processes and performance is thus necessary for accelerating adaptation.<sup>949</sup> This is all the more true in complex environments where individuals and organizations are expected to accomplish a range of tasks quickly and simultaneously to support institutional goals.<sup>950</sup> “We live in a dynamic world in which the pace, scope, and complexity of change are increasing. The continued march of globalization, the growing number of independent actors, and advancing technology have increased global connectivity, interdependence and complexity, creating greater uncertainties, systemic risk and a less predictable future...In this environment, the key to achieving lasting strategic advantage is the

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<sup>948</sup> For discussion of the U.S. military taking on characteristics of networks see, Metz, Steven and Douglas V. Johnson II, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy: Definition, Background, and Strategic Concepts*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, January 2001.

<sup>949</sup> See, U.S. Joint Forces Command, *The Joint Operational Environment: Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force*, JFC, 2008, p. 47.

<sup>950</sup> Wong, Leonard, *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 2004, p. 5. See also, Gehler, Christopher P. *Agile Leaders*, Op Cit.

ability to rapidly and accurately anticipate and adapt to complex challenges.”<sup>951</sup> Recognizing organizational adaptation accelerants and inhibitors is vital to retaining relevancy and the capacity to act strategically.

### **8.1.7 Inhibiting Adaptation**

Understanding what inhibits organizational adaptation is as important, if not more so, as understanding what accelerates organizational adaptation. Understanding adaptive inhibitors is important not only for augmenting the effectiveness of U.S. Army organizations but also for diminishing the effectiveness of threat organizations. While not all threat organizations are the same and not all U.S. Army organizations are the same, organizational processes for improving and for retarding adaptation in the achievement of organizational goals are similar. “Since adaptation results in part from learning it is impossible to totally prevent adaptation. The best that can be achieved is to limit the adaptability of the organization or to control the direction of adaptation.”<sup>952</sup>

An organization’s adaptability is in part a function of its organizational form.<sup>953</sup> Different organizational forms adapt differently based upon their ability to translate resources into organizational goals. Eliminating excess capacity and reducing the redundancy of organizational members while increasing the functions that an organization has to perform will

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<sup>951</sup> McConnell, J. M., Vision 2015: A Globally Networked and Integrated Intelligence Enterprise, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Washington DC, 2008, p. 4.

<sup>952</sup> Carley, Kathleen M., “Stopping Adaptation,” CASOS, 21 June 2002.

<sup>953</sup> Ibid.

reduce its capacity for adaptation.<sup>954</sup> Organizational adjustments of inputs and outputs will suffer accordingly. Reducing the interaction among organizational members is also important for reducing the chances of spreading innovations.<sup>955</sup> An inability to collaborate, either physically or virtually, not only reduces the likelihood of innovations being spread, it reduces the likelihood of innovations being spread properly. Many times, interaction among members in a networked organization, particularly in a violent competitive environment, is reduced because of secrecy protocols, membership attrition, and because the network's structure changes frequently. In this respect, the Iraqi insurgency would typify what Carley terms maladaptive organizations: "maladaptive organizations tend to spend excessive time bringing on and letting go. This too destroys transactive memory as it makes personnel have to spend excessive time learning who is still in the organization or learning what personnel know. Thus factors encouraging such personnel changes will also inhibit adaptivity."<sup>956</sup>

Assuming that an organization is perfectly suited (or even well suited) for operations can also hinder organizational adaptation. An overly focused organization, assuming that what it is good at doing is translatable into other types of operations, can weaken adaptive capacity: "we should recognize that over-focus on a single type of warfare—large-scale, conventional warfare—inhibited understanding of other types of warfare, and of warfare as a whole. We should, therefore, beware the potential danger of over-focus on post-modern warfare having the same result."<sup>957</sup> Similarly, having an under-focused organization can reduce the likelihood of

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<sup>954</sup> Ibid.

<sup>955</sup> Ibid.

<sup>956</sup> Ibid.

<sup>957</sup> Kiszely, John, *Op Cit*, p. 23.

adaptations taking hold or spreading throughout an institution. A lack of focus can be the result of or can contribute to organizational friction and decreased opportunities for collaboration and learning.

Having inappropriate doctrine, goals, and strategies might all contribute to an organization being unwilling to change or, when changes are made, they might be made in the pursuit of poorly chosen goals. Furthermore, assuming that organizations do constantly adapt when they do not might negatively alter perceptions of how that organization is performing; adaptations to perceived changes might thus be misguided. For instance, many tribal organizations do not deviate from traditional ways of doing things and many military organizations have changed very little since the end of the Cold War.<sup>958</sup> When adaptations are made they almost always prompt antidotal behavior by competitive adversaries.<sup>959</sup> Assuming that an innovation has particular salience for a long period or assuming that doctrine and strategy can remain static is unwise. Organizations are never perfect and neither are their methods; if they were, they wouldn't be so for long. This is particularly true in the rapidly changing post-9/11 international security environment where so-called 'revolutions' tend to be short lived. "By common discovery, imitation, theft, purchase, and espionage, especially if revolutionary change is demonstrated in war, the RMA of the day will be recognized and eventually comprehended.

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<sup>958</sup> "Deeply tribal societies often have great difficulty advancing beyond their traditional ways." Ronfeldt, David, Op Cit, p. 5. "We are in a period of *relative military stasis* when compared to developments of approximately the past 150 years." Alach, Zhivan J., Slowing Military Change, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, October 2008, p. 4. In fact, in many ways, operations and tactics are regressing.

<sup>959</sup> Gray, Colin S., Recognizing and Understanding Revolutionary Change in Warfare: The Sovereignty of Context, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 2006.

When feasible and judged desirable, it will be copied in parts. When borrowed, it will be domesticated to fit local cultural preferences and strategic circumstances. If it cannot or should not be imitated, then the challenge will be to find ways of warfare that negates much of its potential.”<sup>960</sup>

### **8.1.8 Implications**

The Cycle of Mutual Adaptation in Iraq revealed a number of methods and practices for slowing or enhancing organizational adaptation. Expanded sets of capabilities and competencies and the harmonization of organizational goals around coherent objectives all enhanced the ability to adapt.<sup>961</sup> Technology proved to be a force multiplier when tied to enhancing organizational adaptation and information flows. But technology can also create false perceptions of dominance and can cause an information overflow if not managed effectively.<sup>962</sup> Applying traditional combat methods to overused and misunderstood concepts, such as Clausewitz’s center of gravity, at times was counterproductive and resulted in a more dispersed competitive network. “Destroying nodes and the ties between actors and organizations, as manifold as these nodes and ties are, is only a temporary solution; criminal organizations and their constituent actors will only

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<sup>960</sup> Ibid, p. 46.

<sup>961</sup> See, Ancker, Clinton J., “Doctrine for Asymmetric Warfare,” *Military Review*, July-August 2003, p. 23.

<sup>962</sup> Watts, Barry D., *Clausewitzian Friction and Future War*, McNair paper 68, National Defense University, Washington DC, 2004, p. 81.

adapt and re-emerge at a later date.”<sup>963</sup> In fact, where communicative means are present, attacking a network directly might actually increase its effectiveness and efficiency and depending on the centrality or uniqueness of the target to the network.<sup>964</sup> “Within a cellular network, efforts to destabilize it meet with mixed success. In fact, such strategies can actually lead to improvement in the cellular networked organization’s performance depending on the nature of the task being done. Cellular networks are in this sense extremely adaptive. One reason for this is that the cellularization encourages rapid information flow.”<sup>965</sup> Destabilizing organizations without understanding how they adapt can lead to unforeseen consequences.<sup>966</sup> Actions in a competitive environment can produce initial successes but with second and third order effects benefiting a competitor. Collateral effects can cut both ways and can affect competing organizations differently at different times and in different locations. “An organization must be aware of the second-order effects of its actions and understand that any intervention in a complex system creates positive and negative aftershocks.”<sup>967</sup> Understanding how various enablers affect the modification of organizational inputs and outputs is critical to understanding and positively or negatively affecting the adaptive cycle.

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<sup>963</sup> Serena, Chad, “Dynamic Attenuation: Terrorism, Transnational Crime and the Role of the US Army Special Forces,” *Global Crime*, Volume 8, Number 4, November 2007, p. 362. See also, Tsvetovat, Maksim and Kathleen M. Carley, “Bouncing Back: Recovery Mechanisms of Covert Networks,” *CASOS*, p. v.

<sup>964</sup> Sparrow, Malcolm K., “Network Vulnerabilities and Strategic Intelligence in Law Enforcement,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Volume 5, Number 3, 1992, p. 264.

<sup>965</sup> Carley, Kathleen M., *Stopping Adaptation*, *CASOS*, 21 June 2002.

<sup>966</sup> Carley, Kathleen M., “Destabilizing Networks,” *Connections*, Volume 24, Number 3, 2002, p. 86. See also, Carley, Kathleen M., “Dynamic Network Analysis for Counter-Terrorism,” *CASOS*, Undated.

<sup>967</sup> Lopez, Rafael, *Op Cit*, p. 57.

Organization is one factor determinative of success in competitive adaptation. Although the U.S. Army was and remains hierarchical, it was capable of decentralizing operational control and using enhanced communications to make itself more like a network.<sup>968</sup> The insurgency, although networked, was capable of transcending its form, at least intermittently, to coordinate operations and tactical missions based on operational and tactical goals. Failing to recognize that these structures can also inhibit success is problematic. In the long term, the insurgency was incapable of maintaining levels of coordination necessary to achieve organizational success and the U.S. Army has seemingly downplayed the adaptations required for success in Iraq by failing to recognize the weakness of its traditional organizational form for combating networked threats.<sup>969</sup> “The Army, to its credit, is energetically adapting to the situations in which it now finds itself. It is creating more combat brigades and more specialized units, e.g., civil affairs and military police. Furthermore, tactics, techniques, and procedures are being developed and implemented to respond to the tactical lessons the Army in the field is learning. Nevertheless, a review of the Army’s concepts for the future reveals a remarkable consistency in the belief that well-trained combat forces are capable of performing any task.”<sup>970</sup> Rearranging a centralized and hierarchical organization will not necessarily create or enhance organizational adaptation but

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<sup>968</sup> Robhenberg argues that this might be the key for success against networked insurgent organizations. Rothenberg, Richard, “From Whole Cloth: Making up the Terrorist Network,” *Connections*, Volume 24, Issue 3.

<sup>969</sup> As Keagle and Martin argue, “Almost all responsible voices acknowledge that the structures and processes built to respond to the threat environment of the Cold War are ill suited to deal with the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its new kind of war and peace. Simply put, the status quo is not good enough. Keagle, James M. and Adrian R. Martin, *Organizing for National Security: Unification or Coordination?*,” *Defense Horizons* Number 60, December 2007, p. 7.

<sup>970</sup> Johnson, David E., *Learning Large Lessons*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007, p. 205.

realigning management, processes, interactions, and information sharing will.<sup>971</sup> Similarly, enhancing network capacity will not necessarily improve organizational adaptation; there is such a thing as being too networked for accomplishing durable long-term or robust organizational objectives.

The appropriate use of IT is another factor contributing to success in competitive adaptation. IT can enable new organizational forms to take shape or it can enhance existing organizational sub-parts' coordination and communications. "Information technology is a critical enabler of new ways of organizing. Fluid and flexible patterns of working relationships are based on communications networks, yielding innovative contexts for interactions and collaborative work that span traditional organizational boundaries. Point-to-point communication (communication directly between two people, with no intervening person or channels necessary) between groups, often supported by information technology, integrates borders between them."<sup>972</sup> Furthermore, IT can allow management or command and control mechanisms to be less hierarchical. This benefits networks and hierarchical organizations equally. Because of IT, small unit leaders in the insurgency and the U.S. Army alike were capable of carrying out decentralized operations.

Studied in isolation, adaptations appear differently than when examined as part of a whole. Mutual adaptation occurred cyclically and across time. Insurgent behavior affected the U.S. Army's behavior and vice versa. Accordingly, some methods and procedures were only effective for a short while until eclipsed by better methods or negated by counteractions. For

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<sup>971</sup> Sigel, Michael B., "Military Culture and Transformation," Joint Force Quarterly, Issue 49, 2d Quarter, 2008, p. 106.

<sup>972</sup> Holohan, Anne, Op Cit p. 94.



instance, insurgent usage of IEDs fell from about 110 incidents per day in September 2007 to 26 per day in 2008. During this time EFP usage rose, IRAMs emerged, and building-borne IEDs (houses wired to explode) proliferated:<sup>973</sup>

*“As soon as you could counteract what the insurgents were doing, they would turn around and counteract what we were doing. So, if we could counteract their IEDs with armor then they would put bigger IEDs out.”*<sup>974</sup>

IEDs and emplacement was crude at first but became more sophisticated. Initial countering came in the form of speeding through possible kill zones, hardened vehicles, emitter interference (Warlock jamming devices) and specialized bomb clearance vehicles (Buffalo clearance vehicle). More sophisticated, integrated, and persistent methods followed, incorporating snipers, patrols, and aerostat-mounted systems (on UAVs).<sup>975</sup> Neutralizing IEDs was enormously difficult but neutralizing their emplacement proved somewhat effective.<sup>976</sup> In combination with decreased IED usage, enemy-initiated attacks fell by about 70 percent from 180 attacks per day in June 2007 to about 50 per day in February 2008.<sup>977</sup> This reflected changes in the insurgent organization (the split between the Sunni Tribes and foreign elements of the insurgency) and the

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<sup>973</sup> Dale, Catherine, Op Cit, p. 85.

<sup>974</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baquba (July 2006-November 2007), Personal Interview.

<sup>975</sup> Pirnie, Bruce R. and Edward O’Connell, Counterinsurgency in Iraq (2003-2006), RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, pp. 46-47.

<sup>976</sup> Rubin, Michael, Op Cit, 31 May 2007.

<sup>977</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, Securing, Stabilizing, and Rebuilding Iraq, Progress Report: Some Gains Made, Updated Strategy Needed, June 2008.

increasing effectiveness of the U.S. Army for countering insurgent operations and exploiting organizational weaknesses. This process was continuous and sometimes favored the insurgency while at other times it favored the U.S. Army. As one method was discovered, it would either be abandoned or shelved for a period of time based on competitor reactions and environmental changes. For example, the insurgency began to effectively use napalm in attacks on coalition troops in Mosul in early 2005. But once the U.S. Army uncovered large caches of ingredients for its manufacture, linked production to use, and specifically targeted napalm operations, the incidence of napalm attacks decreased dramatically:

*“The enemy was adapting, we were adapting, and things were changing. All the sudden we started getting hit with napalm. Some of our targets were changing and some of our intelligence was changing so sometimes we had to go in and look for ingredients. We would have to consult with JAG [The Judge Advocate General]: can we hold a guy when he has a whole roomful of soap when it is obvious that the guy isn’t that concerned with hygiene? Is this enough given the tactics that they are using? Well, after a couple of months, the napalm bombs that we were getting hit with disappeared.”<sup>978</sup>*

Each competitor in Iraq also modified organizational forms to achieve its organizational goals when the environment changed:

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<sup>978</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

- The U.S. Army transformed from a vertically and hierarchically integrated organization to a hybrid vertically/horizontally integrated organization by taking advantage of communications, and inter-netted capabilities and by lifting centralized controls.
- The insurgency transformed from a horizontally integrated organization (initial network structure based on existing social structures and communications capabilities) to a vertical/semi-conglomerated organization (when size and freedom of maneuver grew and operations expanded in scope) and back to a horizontally integrated organization (as the U.S. Army transformed).

Adaptive responses were based on organizational strengths:

- The U.S. Army used expensive and resource intensive institutional resources to conduct analysis and create pervasive responses informed by organization-level adaptations.
- The insurgency (for the most part) used low-tech local analysis to create low-cost and rapidly manufactured responses based on organizational successes.

Accordingly, recognizing a significant disparity in analytical skill and resource depth, the insurgency increasingly sought to take advantage of its strengths while undermining those of the U.S. Army:

*“They didn’t have our technology. They came up with low-level answers to defeat our ability to track or intercept what they were doing. Either consciously or*

*subconsciously, this worked. You can't track washing machine timers, soap, and dead dogs. Their adaptation was that they were going backwards, knowing that it was difficult for us to track. These things cost money and that is easy to track. Technology is expensive and in short supply, that is easy to track. Low cost, hard to track, everyday items is what they...Once they dip down to a certain level of technology that is so low that you can't track it, you have to go higher into the logical process as to why they are doing this.”<sup>979</sup>*

And, each competitor sought advantages whenever they were perceived:

*“In COIN, both sides race for micro-advantages. No weapon or tactic works forever. So the pace of adaptation becomes critical. And it's not just the U.S. pace.”<sup>980</sup>*

Understanding the operational environment is critical for braking or accelerating adaptation. If an organization becomes too complex, its adaptive cycle will be slowed. Inherently, networked organizations have an advantage over conventional forces in this respect. But if an organization is too simple, it will not be able to understand environmental changes and thus won't be able respond to changes.<sup>981</sup> Anticipating how actors and their organizations will

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<sup>979</sup> Soldier Deployed to Mosul (November 2004-October 2005), Personal Interview, 29 September 2008.

<sup>980</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, E-mail Interview, 13 September 2008.

<sup>981</sup> Vinci, Anthony, “The ‘Problems of Mobilization’ and the Analysis of Armed Groups,” *Parameters*, Spring 2006, p. 61.

modify inputs and outputs to achieve adaptation is vital in any competitive adaptive struggle. Each is a catalyst for the other.<sup>982</sup> “Today’s competent insurgents are adaptive and are often part of a widespread network that constantly and instantly communicates. Successful COIN practices and appropriate countermeasures pass rapidly throughout the insurgency, and insurgents can implement changes quickly. COIN leaders must avoid complacency and be at least as adaptive as the adversary.”<sup>983</sup>

Since the competition in Iraq has dwindled substantially in the past 2 years, it is unclear if the U.S. Army is going to maintain its decentralized capabilities and whether it will expand on its organizational capacity for adaptation. Despite continuing efforts to rebalance and Transform, the U.S. Army has accepted stability operations in its new doctrine. Furthermore, the DOD has required that intelligence efforts should incorporate an “optimal mix of capabilities to meet stability operations requirements” and that “stability operations skills, such as foreign language capabilities, regional area expertise, and experience with foreign governments and International Organizations, shall be developed and incorporated into Professional Military Education at all levels.”<sup>984</sup> How this is incorporated into future structures, doctrine, training, and most importantly, practice, remains to be seen.

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<sup>982</sup> Wyszynski, Joseph L., *Adaptability: Components of the Adaptive Competency for U.S. Army Direct and Organizational Level Leaders*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 7 February 2005, p. 7.

<sup>983</sup> Cohen, Eliot, et al., “Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review*, March-April 2006, p. 53.

<sup>984</sup> England, Gordon, *Op Cit*, p. 4.

### **8.1.9 Returning to the Hypothesis**

When the U.S. Army did finally achieve near harmony in the adaptive cycle, it was capable of marshaling substantially more resources than the insurgency and in a fashion more consistent with institutional, and ultimately, national objectives. Full spectrum capabilities were achieved and organizations were capable of matching and translating tactical actions into strategic objectives and vice versa. While the insurgency was still very adaptive in 2007 and 2008, it was frustrated by organizational competition for resources within the insurgency and from external competitors. Thus, although the insurgency was adaptive, diminishing resource pools contributed to its weakened capacity for competing with the counterinsurgency and for accomplishing organizational goals.

## **8.2 CASES IN POINT: TRENDS IN THE FUSION OF THE SPECTRUM—A SHORT REVIEW OF THE RECENT PAST**

In the post-Cold War period the spectrum of conflict was fused in many instances but perhaps most spectacularly in Iraq. Humanitarian operations, developing civilian capacities and infrastructure, unconventional combat, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and regular combat were all tasks, in some combination, that had to be conducted simultaneously to achieve strategic objectives in a number of post-Cold War conflicts. These operations were not OOTW; these operations were war as it came to be known in the post-Cold War international security environment. In each case the enemy was adaptive, the environment was dynamic and required full spectrum capabilities, and the U.S. Army was to some degree incapable of adjusting

organizational inputs and outputs to achieve its goals and objectives, particularly in the long-term. A diverse combination of traditional and unconventional ‘military’ and ‘civilian’ tasks was required for even moderate success in limited missions in Panama, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo, and elsewhere. Although these operations were quantitatively and qualitatively much less complex than operations in Iraq, they still represent the types of missions that prevail when strategy necessitates military involvement in stability operations whether they occur pre-, post-, or during conflict.

To be sure, the substantial and enduring involvement of the U.S. military in some form of stability operations is not an historical aberration. “It is not just current conflicts that require a long-term deployment of relatively large numbers of American forces; every successful major conflict since 1945—Germany, Japan, South Korea, Panama, Iraq (1991 and 2003), Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan—has required the same thing.”<sup>985</sup> Recent operations like those conducted in Iraq reinforce and elongate this trend. And despite short and selective organizational memories and protestations to the contrary, these conflicts all required substantial full spectrum capabilities, sometimes sequential but more often than not simultaneous. Non-state adversaries in unstable areas armed with the propagated tools of a globalized world and operating in the convoluted post-Cold War international security environment are not deviations from the norm but instead are the evolution of the norm with more modern capabilities and differing strategic objectives. Adversaries, considered being of substantial import, enough so to require the deployment of sizable forces and resources in Africa, South America, Eastern Europe, and across Asia were and are all, in some ways, facsimiles of the threat organizations that emerged, adapted, and evolved in Iraq. The complexity and highly networked nature of this

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<sup>985</sup> Donnelly, Thomas and Frederick W. Kagan, *Op Cit*, p. 142.

threat type might be new in degree but it is hardly unique given that it is just a more contemporary version of a non-state adversary that has evolved since at least the end of the Cold War.

Three categorical differences distinguish newer adversaries from those of the past: their increasingly non-state character; their complexity, capability, durability, and perniciousness and; their goals and objectives. Non-state threat organizations have appeared and have conducted operations, with and without the support of states, on every populated continent, and in areas where state control was high and where it was absent. Boundaries and bureaucracies are not hurdles that need to be overcome by modern non-state adversaries. Threat forces in the Philippines, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Somalia have all demonstrated, to differing degrees, sophistication in their methods, a penchant for violence, and the durability of their cause. These adversaries are hardly a fad, are likely to persist well into the future, and because of their perceived successes, are likely to accrete like-minded adherents and attract the support of friendly organizations. Insurgents in Iraq, Colombia, India, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Afghanistan have dispensed with 20<sup>th</sup> Century notions of following structured paths towards control of the state and are instead content with its absence. As Metz argues, these groups “have little hope of or even interest in becoming a regime—whether of their entire country or some break-away segment of it.”<sup>986</sup> It is quite possible that sub-state actors, organizations, tribes, and other assorted social groupings are not interested in being a part of the modern state system and are equally uninterested in adopting the traditional methods of warfare that modern states employ and expect other belligerents to adhere to. Unless U.S. strategy changes significantly—and

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<sup>986</sup> Metz, Steven, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2007, p. 49.



demotes these enemies in prominence while also obviating the need for full spectrum capacities in unstable areas—doctrine and force planning will have to account for these facts. Military victory against these actors, particularly when operating in populated areas—under state control or not—cannot be translated into serious political victory under current strategic guidance or with the force structure and doctrine of the past without significant and continuous organizational adaptation.

States exist in a variety of forms. Modern, pre-modern, tribal, fragile, weak, and strong: not all states are the same and non-state adversaries exist and differ in each. Even when and where a state and its apparatuses tangibly exist the state might not function appropriately or in accordance with the basic characteristics attributed to a modern state. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the forces of the state or non-state forces residing within a state's boundaries will follow prescribed and preferred doctrines when engaging opposing forces, regardless of the opposing forces' composition and intent and regardless of international perceptions of what is acceptable behavior. Somalia, although typically treated as a worst case scenario and often relegated to its own special category of state-less existence, is not, as Little argues, "qualitatively different from other regions where states are shallow and weak and formal economies are moribund."<sup>987</sup> Warlord and terrorist activities in Somalia are legendary but are not exceptional. Some states and regions in Africa, the Caribbean basin, South America, the Middle East, and South Asia are also notably shallow and weak, their economies fluctuate significantly from one decade to the next, and they typically fail to make long-term progress. Accordingly, threat organizations in these areas ebb and flow in their accrued power and insidiousness. On occasion they have drawn

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<sup>987</sup> Little, Peter D., *Somalia: Economy without State*, The International African Institute, Oxford, 2003, p. 165.

the attention of U.S. forces as part of a persistent strategy requiring the provision and enforcement of global stability.

Post-Cold War U.S. strategy generally and, in particular, post-9/11 U.S. strategy required and requires a capacity for achieving military victory and for the translation of military victory into the achievement of political objectives, regardless of the enemy faced in the process and regardless of the area where this adversary is physically located. Conflicts in Iraq against state-based forces (twice) and a networked insurgency, against Serbia, and in Afghanistan all were conducted on the premise that military victory could be translated into strategic success. Explicitly, the U.S. Army had to be full spectrum capable. Implicitly, because the institutional Army was not full spectrum capable, the tactical Army had to radically adjust organizational inputs and outputs to achieve organizational goals. Mandel's observations on a number of post-Cold War conflicts illustrates the difficulties of realizing and achieving this outcome: "Although each case involved unquestioned military victory by the United States and its allies, who possessed overwhelming advantages in military force, and each achieved an immediate goal (freeing people in Kuwait, Serbia, Afghanistan, and Iraq from an oppressive regime), in many ways each constitutes a vivid illustration of the pitfalls of pursuing strategic victory. Indeed the general result has been decidedly disappointing long-term political consequences, to such a degree that—for some observers—it calls the value of these wars into serious question. Virtually all were followed by regional instability (without the spread of peaceful democratic values), the presence of continued violence, the escalation of suffering for defeated states' citizenry, and some significant international resentment: and none of the cases unambiguously achieved dramatic positive postwar changes fitting all of the war objectives."<sup>988</sup> Organizational adaptation

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<sup>988</sup> Mandel, Robert, *The Meaning of Military Victory*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO, 2006, pp. 109-110.

was a problem for the U.S. Army in each case: it either did not engage in full spectrum operations (because it was incapable or it tried and was to a greater and lesser degree (depending on the complexity of the conflict and the foe) unsuccessful.

An inability to conduct a range of operations across the spectrum of conflict, simultaneously or otherwise, continued to shadow the U.S. Army from the end of the Cold War through the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The sense that the U.S. military, by being highly adept at conducting HIC missions, was equally endowed for the conduct of either sequential or simultaneous full spectrum operations, evaporated rather quickly after years of conflict in the sands and towns of Iraq. “The air of hubris that some Army officers displayed just a few years ago, after victories in Panama, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo and Afghanistan...has dissipated, replaced by a sense that they have a lot to learn about how to operate effectively in Iraq.”<sup>989</sup> Given recent difficulties, the U.S. military needs to learn quite a bit more about how to conceptualize adversaries as dynamic entities that refuse to adhere to any doctrinal template, reject normative prescriptions for behavior and form, and are themselves adaptive and quite capable of creating chaos across the operational spectrum. On this, the historical record is unequivocal. Operations once derisively termed as OOTW or MOOTW are just as likely to derail strategic objectives as are conventional enemies if they are not treated and adapted to appropriately. Technological might and the capacity for rapid conventional dominance will hardly deter motivated organizations that have watched events unfold in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Somalia; instead, it will provoke adaptive and amoebic responses like those that have confounded state-based forces for the better part of the past 2 decades.

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<sup>989</sup> Ricks, Thomas E., “Lessons Learned in Iraq Show up in Army Classes,” Washington Post, 21 January 2006.

Far from withering and receding in the face of the technological prowess of modern state militaries in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 international security environment, current adversaries seem to be embracing all available tactics and techniques to combat state-based forces or to thwart state-based interference in their operations and activities. Although unconventional methods prevailed and continue to prevail in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, other more conventional methods prevail elsewhere. The Pentagon's preferences notwithstanding, threat organizations embrace conventional or unconventional methods or modalities at their discretion. Where possible, and at the total inconvenience of the forces they face, adversaries adapt to the enemies they are confronting with total disregard for what is acceptable or preferred in their enemies' strategies and doctrines. This, coincidentally, makes combating these adversaries all the more difficult and requires a significant amount of spectrum fusing legerdemain by U.S. and other modern conventional forces. The ability to transubstantiate capabilities and thus demand multi-spectral responses, at times and places of the *adversary's* choosing, is particularly confounding to modern, centralized, and hierarchical military institutions.

The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in July of 2006 illustrates this last point. To counter the Israeli invasion, Hezbollah, aided and abetted by the activities of Lebanese civilians, engaged the Israeli military in a conflict that was closely watched by western observers. Inconveniently, and just as the U.S. Army reluctantly began to embrace the notion of irregular warfare in its doctrine in nearby Iraq, Lebanese fighters engaged in a sophisticated, and apparently unpredicted, conventional operation against invading Israeli forces. As Steve Biddle argues, Hezbollah's actions deviated from the "classical guerrilla model" employed in Iraq and

Afghanistan.<sup>990</sup> But Hezbollah's tactics were not unique. As the post-Cold War international security environment has evolved, many non-state adversaries have increased their capacity for waging conventional conflict, with more and more success, and in more and more locations: Croatian Separatists in the Balkans; Rwandan Rebels; Chechens; al Qaeda in Afghanistan; and Lebanese fighters all used a combination of conventional methods and technologies to fight their wars.<sup>991</sup> Although guerrilla and irregular warfare might be adopted by future adversaries, in all likelihood non-state actors will also look to incorporate more conventional capabilities into their conceptual and doctrinal arsenals. "Irregular, un-modernized, adaptive forces will make use of conventional military capabilities with similar purposes, if dissimilar methods. Hybridization, rapid technological advancement, and capability developed as a result of asymmetric concepts generate an environment of constantly changing requirements and needs."<sup>992</sup> Whichever methods are most expedient and puzzling to their enemies will be those used by modern day non-state threat organizations.

Two characteristics of modern non-state actors and organizations are particularly threatening: 1) they can operate relatively independently and in a variety of configurations depending on the environment and; 2) they might or might not have a positive vision or tangible goals. In short, non-state adversaries can mutate frequently and might have disorder as a

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<sup>990</sup> Biddle, Stephen D. and Jeffrey A. Friedman, *The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, September 2008, pp. 87-88.

<sup>991</sup> Biddle, Stephen, "Funding the U.S. Counterinsurgency Wars," Council on Foreign Relations, 19 June 2009.

<sup>992</sup> U.S. Joint Forces Command, *The Joint Operational Environment: The World Through 2030 and Beyond*, May 2007.

principal organizational goal. The Taliban in Afghanistan and Western Pakistan typifies the first characteristic: “The Taliban organization is a network of franchises, an arrangement that fits well with tribal traditions. A small militant group begins calling itself ‘the local Taliban.’ It gains some form of recognition from the central Taliban hierarchy in return for its support and cooperation. The new cell supports Taliban grand strategy, but retains local freedom of action. This modus operandi preserves tribal loyalties and territorial boundaries.”<sup>993</sup> The second characteristic is best embodied by al Qaeda and its affiliated organizations. Other than a set of long-term and almost wholly unachievable goals, al Qaeda is interested most in influence building, self-replication, and survival. Each of these interests is best met in environments where order is in short supply and where states and their agents are unwelcome.

Future non-state adversaries, like their predecessors, if not already so disposed, will likely be collocated with civilian populations and in areas where state control is at its nadir. To counter these enemies, the U.S. Army and associated agencies will have to maintain fused, full spectrum capabilities, and the ability to adapt in highly fluid environments. Operations as far back as Vietnam and Lebanon and more recently in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan exposed the weaknesses of non-adaptive planning and operations and the struggles associated with armed and unarmed intervention in complex environments.<sup>994</sup>

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<sup>993</sup> Afsar, Shahid, et al, “The Taliban: An Organizational Analysis,” *Military Review*, May-June 2008, p. 65.

<sup>994</sup> For further discussion see, Cordesman, Anthony H., “Afghanistan, Iraq & Self-Inflicted Wounds: The Strategic Lessons of Armed Nation Building,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 2007, Collins, Joseph J., “The Perils of Planning: Lessons from Afghanistan and Iraq,” *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles*, Eds. Joseph R. Cerami and Jay W. Boggs,

Moreover, these cases demonstrated the folly of assuming that tactical combat victories could translate into strategic success and that operations would unfold in the sequential manner depicted in military manuals and planning templates. Static threat models and templates, even those based on non-state actors, are just that: templates. They are not particularly useful as planning constructs in non-sequential operations, are not real, and do not adapt as they can or will have to in the real world. Lessons learned from operations or models are only useful insofar as they are drawn upon for the modification of inputs and outputs in the adaptive cycle. Despite its importance, incorporating tactical adaptations into institutional adaptation has been the *bête noir* of military planners and prognosticators throughout the course of modern U.S. military history.

All of this is not to say that the U.S. military in general and the U.S. Army specifically has not learned from recent encounters with non-state adversaries in full spectrum environments. To the contrary, the U.S. Army has learned quite a bit in the past two decades:

- In Haiti—“The Army relearned the lesson that the tactical actions of the Army soldier have powerful strategic, diplomatic, and informational effects. This lesson, gathered then, would be applied to great effect in desert towns and cities of Iraq.”<sup>995</sup>
- In Rwanda—“Perhaps the greatest lesson was that the Army led its deployment not with combat units and equipment (tanks and armored vehicles), but rather with combat support and combat service support personnel and systems. The tip of the spear was not a

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Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, December 2007, and Nagl, John, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, University of Chicago Press, 2005, p. 219.

<sup>995</sup> Eventually. See, Fontenot, Gregory, et al, *Op Cit*, p. 12.

mechanized infantry company led by a burly male Ranger second lieutenant; it was a water purification platoon led by a female second lieutenant.”<sup>996</sup>

- In Bosnia—“The Army had the opportunity to wrestle with the challenge of applying overwhelming conventional force as an instrument of peace enforcement and peacekeeping.”<sup>997</sup>
- In Kosovo—“In every way that mattered, air power won the fighting in Kosovo, while ground units served to consolidate that victory. The services learned important lessons in joint and combined cooperation and coordination that continued effectively during OIF. Other lessons include movement away from prescriptive time-phased force and deployment data (TPFDD) force-deployment management system toward a more flexible request for forces (RFF) packaging system.”<sup>998</sup>

But although learning contributes to it, learning is not the same as adapting and adaptation will be necessary in any environment where the adversary is dynamic and has the organizational acumen to adapt and where the U.S. Army is not almost ideally predisposed for conducting operations and translating tactical victory into strategic, political success. Neither state-based nor non-state based adversaries can be excepted from this dynamic; encountering either or both will require successful organizational adaptations. Yogi Berra was correct in saying that it is tough to make predictions, especially about the future, but the recent past is a good starting point for judging the necessity of any prospective adaptive capacities.

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<sup>996</sup> Ibid.

<sup>997</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

<sup>998</sup> Ibid, pp. 13-14.



### **8.3 THE STABILITY OF THE LEGACY—THE NEED FOR “BALANCE” AND A RETURN TO “FULL SPECTRUM CAPABILITIES”**

The U.S. Army’s legacy is one of being prepared to conduct HIC missions in support of MCO against highly regular and conventional foes. The stability of this legacy and the acceptance of risk at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict contribute to a reduction in organizational capacities for adaptation to other threat organizations and for other missions. That this legacy should still have relevance—state-based conventional enemies have not disappeared—and still reverberate through the culture, doctrine, and institution’s memory is no surprise. That the U.S. Army has been unswerving in its official references to being full spectrum capable, despite experiential evidence to the contrary, is no surprise either. What is surprising is that U.S. Army documents reflect that there: 1) is still an assumption of an even divide between threat types, a Scylla of non-state adversaries and a Charybdis of state-based enemies with the U.S. Army inescapably stuck in between; 2) is still an assumption that MCOs are a if not the dominant future mission despite overwhelming recent experience to the contrary and in light of defense strategies indicating at least the recognition that there is a range of threats that need to be addressed and; 3) that there is considerable discussion of a need to ‘re-balance’ the force for a return to legacy operations and a de-emphasis of irregular missions in force planning, doctrine, and training. Given the U.S. Army’s understandable historical penchant for combat operations it is difficult not to assume that rebalancing does not really imply a rebalance but an unbalancing back towards conventional and preferred mission sets and a divergence away from true full spectrum capabilities.

Sean Davis presents the rebalancing debate in terms that are reminiscent of full spectrum capability discussions in the 1990s insofar as there remains a distinct and obvious boundary

between combat and all other operations. This is coupled with the curiously defunct, yet accepted notion that a combat capable force can succeed in all missions and that any other type of force is something less than satisfactory. “One argument against COIN is the ‘readiness issue’; or by focusing on the non-kinetic COIN operations, U.S. troops are unable to kinetically defend the nation. This issue advocates that we can fail in COIN operations and still survive as a nation. Conversely, failure in Major Combat Operations (MCO) once results in our nation perishing. Certainly, this has been true in the past but not so much today...Furthermore, is it possible that the readiness issue is a false dilemma? That in developing COIN warfare the military could actually enhance our nation’s ability to fight MCO.”<sup>999</sup>

Conversely, Jeff McCoy argues that the U.S. Army, by having a multi-capable force, is accepting risk by focusing on the lesser—although more frequent and real—of two dichotomous threat types and that this error, if not corrected, is likely to have catastrophic consequences. He contends that the U.S. Army has been forced to “adapt to defeat the current foe in 2008 which is often a motivated, super-empowered non-state actor. But failure to be ready to fight the next war, potentially a decisive, conventional battle defending the interests if not the borders of the nation will have consequences beyond the scope of fighting terrorists or insurgents in small, ‘gap’ areas of the world.”<sup>1000</sup> Where this next war will occur is somewhat of a mystery. Equally

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<sup>999</sup> Davis, Sean P., *Making the Spoon: Analyzing and Employing Stability Power in Counterinsurgency Operations*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 5 November 2007, p. 16.

<sup>1000</sup> McCoy, Jeff, *Death of the Westphalia State System: Implications for Future Military Employment*, School of Advanced Military Studies U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 15 April 2008, p. 42. Diano argues, “The Army is not training full-spectrum operations as directed in the *NSS*, *NDS*, *QDR*, the Army Campaign Plan and ARFORGEN. Regardless of the clear mandate from these documents the Army

mysterious is what combatant nations will be involved. What is typically ignored in this argument is that threat organizations that are real, documented, and pervasive can manifest almost anywhere and with very little, if any, lead time revealed to their targets and can cause catastrophic damage. What is also ignored is that other more conventional enemies are not currently on the march. Furthermore, the amount of lead time conventional enemies will need to develop forces capable of inflicting damage on the interests or borders of the United States is great and these machinations will be largely visible. Creating, let alone deploying, such an apocalyptic force is difficult to hide, can be deterred by conventional means, and can be significantly degraded if not defeated by existing strategic forces.<sup>1001</sup>

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is focused on training for stability operations and is losing expertise in traditional offensive and defensive operations which maintained the ability to defeat traditional maneuver battle threats. These perishable skills are what had been trained at the CTCs prior to 2002, such as battalion on battalion force-on-force missions at NTC and JMRC.” Diano, Oscar F., *The Combat Training Centers: Training for Full-Spectrum Operations?*, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 15 June 2007, p. 40. Linking the defeat of non-state organizations with strategic consequence has been a problem for politicians and has contributed to the loss of domestic support. See, Arreguin-Toft, Ivan, *Op Cit*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>1001</sup> This is the position of Secretary Gates, ““It is true that the United States would be hard-pressed to fight a major conventional ground war elsewhere on short notice, but as I have asked before, where on earth would we do that? U.S. air and sea forces have ample untapped striking power should the need arise to deter or punish aggression—whether on the Korean Peninsula, in the Persian Gulf, or across the Taiwan Strait.” Gates, Robert M., *Op Cit*, p. 32.

### 8.3.1 Balance, Full Spectrum Capabilities, and Modernization

The definition of the term full spectrum is difficult to discern given the differing qualities that are attributed to this capability. In one sense, being full spectrum capable refers to the capacity for fighting future combat-centric wars. “To reset our force [because of the imbalance caused by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan] we must prepare our soldiers, units, and equipment for future deployments and other contingencies...retrain our Soldiers to accomplish the full spectrum of missions they will be expected to accomplish.”<sup>1002</sup> In another sense, being full spectrum capable means being capable of fighting a range of threat organizations in a multitude of future environments. “Because a return to the Army’s tradition of ‘small wars’ appears to be the primary characteristic of current and future operations, a transformation process that relies on long-range destruction of targets seems anything but ‘full-spectrum.’”<sup>1003</sup> Although there is no published definition for full spectrum capability, a definition exists for full spectrum dominance that decidedly *still* suggests that combat capability neatly and fluidly translates into full spectrum capability: Full Spectrum Dominance—“The cumulative effect of dominance in the air, land, maritime, and space domains and information environment that permits the conduct of joint operations without effective opposition or prohibitive interference.”<sup>1004</sup> One need not hire a haruspex to divine that the official use of the term full spectrum does not really refer to the range

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<sup>1002</sup> Geren, Pete and George W. Casey, Op Cit, p. 8.

<sup>1003</sup> Calhoun, Mark T., Complexity and Innovation: Army Transformation and the Reality of War, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2004, pp. 66-67.

<sup>1004</sup> Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, Op Cit.

of operations on this spectrum but only the narrower band(s) of combat. Prevailing official wisdom and official proclamations indicate that skills falling outside of this band necessarily detract from full spectrum capabilities while skill within this band is transcendent and enables full spectrum capabilities. Therefore, the legacy of mistaking combat capable and full spectrum capable endures.

The term balance, related to but not yet synonymous with full spectrum, is nearly as indecipherable as is the term full spectrum. On one hand, the current force, designed for HIC in MCO, is arguably unbalanced in favor of short-duration conflicts involving almost pure combat capabilities at the expense of future war-making capacity. “Today’s wars are being fought with armed forces designed in the 1980s to excel in a different kind of combat—short-term, high-intensity combat that was expected to lead to rapid and complete victory or defeat in one major theater. Priority was given to getting soldiers and tanks into the fight quickly in the belief that support elements, headquarters, and reinforcements could follow more slowly. But this priority is out of sync with today’s needs and has created an imbalanced active-duty force that faces grave challenges in sustaining long-term deployments and carrying out its varied, numerous missions.”<sup>1005</sup> On the other hand, as Admiral Mullen argues, the current force is unbalanced in favor of long-duration conflicts involving everything but combat capabilities at the expense of future war-making capacity. “The pace of ongoing operations has prevented our forces from training for full-spectrum operations and impacts our ability to be ready to counter future threats. This lack of balance is unsustainable in the long-term. We must balance the strategic depth requirement for long-term national security against the pace of on-going operations.”<sup>1006</sup> It is

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<sup>1005</sup> Donnelly, Thomas and Frederick W. Kagan, *Op Cit*, p. 142.

<sup>1006</sup> Mullen, Mike, CJCS Guidance for 2008-2009, 18 November 2008, p. 2.

supposed then that current conflicts are anomalies that will not be repeated—either by choice or because these enemies will not rematerialize elsewhere---strategy has changed or will significantly change from its present form,<sup>1007</sup> and that the future is full of enemies radically dissimilar than those currently populating the international security environment.<sup>1008</sup>

The amount of time that the U.S. Army spent tactically adapting to achieve goals and objectives in the simultaneous full spectrum environment of Iraq indicates just how unprepared (or out of balance) the Army was for full spectrum operations despite claims to the contrary. Prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, organizational inputs and outputs were almost exclusively tied to the conduct of combat to the detriment of any other conceivable or actual operations. This is the nature of adaptation: if an organization is perfectly suited to accomplishing one objective (i.e., combat), then it is inherently less suited to accomplishing other, differing objectives (i.e., the rest of the spectrum). Paradoxically, the U.S. Army's 2008 Modernization Strategy flips this

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<sup>1007</sup> This is unlikely. Democracy promotion—a derivative of the Democratic Peace Theory—and all of the attendant military sub-tasks associated with democracy promotion (to include substantial stability operations dependent upon or separate from combat operations) are historically bound to the vision and strategies of consecutive U.S. administrations. The rationale is thus, “Because democracies are the most responsible members of the international system, promoting democracy is the most effective long-term measure for strengthening international stability; reducing regional conflicts; countering terrorism and terror-supporting extremism; and extending peace and prosperity.” Bush, George W., *The National Security Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, September 2006, p. 2.

<sup>1008</sup> “Iraq, the Army’s main effort for the foreseeable future, has been described by some as a warfighting anomaly, essentially a problem to be dealt with before we move on to more conventional threats. Unfortunately, this seems to be the prevailing opinion among those authoring the QDR. The technologically enabled force they envision is well suited to fight cold war threats and ill suited to combat insurgencies or conduct other stabilization and reconstruction missions.” Harper, David, *Op Cit*, p. 95.

relationship on its head and argues that expanding spectral capabilities to meet strategic objectives has made the force less full spectrum capable. The authors contend that “The pace of operations coupled with insufficient time between deployments is forcing the Army to focus on counterinsurgency training and equipping to the detriment of preparing for full spectrum operations.”<sup>1009</sup> The Modernization Strategy suggests that the U.S. Army’s efforts to become a full spectrum capable force actually diminished its full spectrum abilities by thinning its capacities for engaging in HIC. There is some truth to this claim. As Admiral Mullen argues, “The imbalance between our readiness for future global missions and the wars we are fighting today limits our capacity to respond to future contingencies, and offers potential adversaries, both state and non-state, incentives to act.”<sup>1010</sup> There is also quite a bit of truth to the argument that were the U.S. Army not so fundamentally incapable of conducting full spectrum operations on the eve of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, such a radical adaptation would not had to have taken place and the force would not be out of balance, however balance is defined. Additionally, it is highly likely that potential future adversaries learned quite a bit from this process.<sup>1011</sup> It should also be noted that combat is only one band of the spectrum of conflict and that many other bands, tied to force and mission requirements, exist and the capabilities required for their execution have expanded dramatically in the course of recent conflicts.

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<sup>1009</sup> Headquarters Department of the Army, Army’s Modernization Strategy, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>1010</sup> Mullen, Mike, Op Cit, p. 3.

<sup>1011</sup> Fonetnot, Gregory, et al, Op Cit, p. 387.

### 8.3.2 The Legacy of Transformation

In order to return to a ‘balance’ and regain ‘full spectrum capability’ the U.S. Army, as part of its sustained Transformation program, continued to develop the FCS. There is still a prevailing assumption that by designing the right type of force, with the right kind of equipment, the U.S. Army will accomplish a structural transference of full spectrum capability against any enemy, whether state or non-state in character, and in any environment. In this respect, FCS assumed two critical roles: it provided consummate full spectrum capabilities and was the key to force rebalancing. In their 2008 submission to the U.S. Congress on the posture of the U.S. Army, former Secretary of the Army Pete Geren and General George Casey used the term balance 23 times when referring to what the U.S. Army needed to do and how the FCS would help accomplish this objective. They argued that modernization “is the key to enhancing our capabilities and maintaining a technological advantage over any enemy we face.”<sup>1012</sup> Additionally, they argued that the FCS is “the core of our modernization effort and will provide our Soldiers an unparalleled understanding of their operational environment, increased precision and lethality, and enhanced survivability. These improved capabilities cannot be achieved by upgrading current vehicles and systems.”<sup>1013</sup> These arguments linking modernization and capability, however detached from experience, are not substantively different than those advocated early in the transformative years of the near post-Cold War era discussed previously.

A reminiscent and recurring supposition in this argument is that a technological edge has not already been achieved over non-state adversaries (or for that matter, state-based adversaries)

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<sup>1012</sup> Geren, Pete and George W. Casey, Op Cit, p. 5.

<sup>1013</sup> Ibid.



and that soldiers will receive an “unparalleled understanding” of any environment via a significant upgrade in equipment and materials. Given that an incredible and unbridgeable chasm separated the technological capacities of the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan and U.S. Army forces (even at the tactical level) and that soldiers did not have—for a very long time, if ever—an unparalleled understanding of their environment or their enemies, the assumption that the FCS or any other modernization program would provide this capacity is puzzling. Equally as puzzling is the assumption that the majority of enemies facing the United States are interested in engaging in a technological arms race reminiscent of those occurring during the Cold War. This assumption makes much more sense if recent experience is rejected and non-state adversaries are ignored. The determinative calculus of what the FCS and any similarly structured modernization program provides defense against balances much better when future, near-peer conventional forces are substituted for technologically crude non-state actors. Not surprisingly, and despite claims to the contrary, the 2005 modernization plan describes the FCS as optimized for offensive operations.<sup>1014</sup>

Conveniently recalculating enemies is the province of professionals and analysts alike. “After six years of essentially waging an irregular war of global scope, the U.S. military has adapted at great costs in sacrifice and treasure to the exigencies of counterinsurgency...but incredulously, there are pundits already at work who aim to reverse these hard won changes because they prefer that the U.S. military revert to a big regular warfare focus.”<sup>1015</sup> But U.S. defense strategy and emergent threat organizations have yet to accommodate the U.S. Army’s

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<sup>1014</sup> Johnson, David E., *Op Cit*, p. 206.

<sup>1015</sup> Cassidy, Robert M., *Counterinsurgency and Military Culture: State Regulars Versus Non-State Irregulars*, *Baltic Security & Defence Review*, Volume 10, 2008, p. 77.

preferences. It is apparently much easier to ignore strategic requirements and recent experience and instead claim that the planned combat-centric future force will be full spectrum capable and that adversaries will be compliantly doctrinal and will knowingly and willfully subject themselves to vanquished status.<sup>1016</sup> “The fundamental problem with the U.S. military’s aversion to counterinsurgency and stability operations is that it has confused the undesirability of these missions with an actual ability to avoid them.”<sup>1017</sup>

Fundamentally, the argument for rebalancing to achieve full spectrum capabilities rests less on strategic requirements and the nature of the enemy and more on the fear of the catastrophic—which, inconveniently, has morphed in defense strategy from a singular Cold War notion of a state-based competitor to a nefarious and amorphous multi-capable non-state organization—and the preferences of the service chiefs. “The principal rationale for the reluctance to reduce the emphasis on heavy forces in the standing army is the fear of being unprepared for a classical-style mechanized war.”<sup>1018</sup> Despite having been engaged in significantly demanding counterinsurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan and providing support to other non-combat related operations across the globe, the U.S. Army is still predisposed to the combat-centric strategic visions of the 1990s and to the Transformation program spawned by

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<sup>1016</sup> The strategic requirement for creating or restoring peace is has not changed since at least the 1990s. “US forces’ continued roles in interventionary operations must be accepted as a given. Operationally, this means the central objective of US military intervention in the post-Cold War era will be to restore peace as the normal condition.” Johnson, Wray R., *Op Cit*, p. 73.

<sup>1017</sup> Ucko, David, “Innovation or Inertia: The U.S. Military and the Learning of Counterinsurgency,” *Orbis*, Spring 2008, p. 291.

<sup>1018</sup> Arquilla, John, *Worst Enemy: The Reluctant Transformation of the American Military*, Ivan R. Dee, Chicago, 2008, p. 45.

these visions. And, as in the 1990s, the U.S. Army is receiving copious guidance from the other service chiefs for how it should continue to transform its forces, without regard to likely adversaries and the requirements necessary for defeating these enemies.<sup>1019</sup> “There are hints of a desire to return to the 1990s focus on wars against larger and more conventional enemies in the wake of the painful experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. Service chiefs are increasingly hostile to sustaining the current operations in Iraq because they are straining the ground forces and drawing resources from the air and sea forces...It is time to stop talking about the relative priority of conventional forces, asymmetric capabilities, long-range strike, special forces, and other structural characteristics of the armed forces and time to start talking about enemies, threats, challenges, and requirements.”<sup>1020</sup> Potential or possible enemies have once again replaced the real and probable enemies that the U.S. Army was supposedly transformed to face over a decade ago. “The U.S. military was redesigned in the 1990s to face numerous possible threats at a time when it was thought that we had no enemies...any discussions of defense reform that attempt to skip over the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and design armed forces for the ‘postwar’ period are worse than useless.”<sup>1021</sup> Yet, the FCS program continued regardless of strategic trajectories and evidence severely undermining the premises of this program.

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<sup>1019</sup> Accordingly, as Bennet writes, “He [Mullen] wrote that the military’s combatant commanders and the uniformed chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines share his worries about the reset and training ‘imbalance.’” Bennett, John T., “Mullen: Iraq War Leaves U.S. Military Vulnerable,” *Army Times*, 1 December 2008, p. 12.

<sup>1020</sup> Donnelly, Thomas and Frederick W. Kagan, *Op Cit*, p. 13.

<sup>1021</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

Kimball describes an ideological myopia surrounding the selected Transformation and force modernization programs embodied by the FCS. “FCS promises to revolutionize warfare with a ‘system of systems’ approach, tied together with a seamless network ‘that allows’ seamless delivery of data ‘in the heat of combat...That such a ‘seamless’ environment rarely exists in the controlled environment of the Combat Training Centers and never in the realities of combat is not permitted to counter the argument. In one video scenario outlining possible uses of the FCS, non-line-of-sight (NLOS) fires always land exactly when and where they are needed, enemies obligingly separate themselves from the civilian population, and supplies arrive exactly on time, negating the need for basic loads. None of this borne out by the current operating environment.”<sup>1022</sup> Ucko argues similarly that despite recent history, the U.S. Army’s force structure continued on a linear path remaining optimized for HIC. “Even though a number of steps taken by DoD improved the ground forces’ suitability for counterinsurgency, their primary aim was to improve the military’s *usability*—and its anticipated ‘use’ remained major combat operations. Despite all the benefits inherent to modularization, for example, the Army’s new unit, the brigade combat team was designed primarily for conventional combat.”<sup>1023</sup> And, notwithstanding a compelling requirement for true full spectrum capabilities in various national and defense security strategies, “this outlook has persisted despite the absence of a near-peer competitor who might challenge the U.S. military in high-intensity warfare.”<sup>1024</sup>

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<sup>1022</sup> Kimball, Raymond A., Op Cit, p 21.

<sup>1023</sup> Ucko, David H., *The New Counterinsurgency Era*, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC, 2009, p. 173.

<sup>1024</sup> Ibid.

Recognizing that the FCS program embodied pre-9/11 preferences rather than reflecting current strategic realities, and despite proponents' claims that "FCS has the full spectrum of combat capabilities and functions 'built in'"<sup>1025</sup> a compromise of sorts was made: force modernization would continue but the FCS program would be cancelled. Because of cost overruns and because Secretary Gates "expressed a specific concern that the portion of the FCS program to field new manned combat vehicles did not adequately reflect the lessons of counterinsurgency and close quarters combat in Iraq and Afghanistan" the Future Combat Systems Brigade Combat Team (FCS BCT) was terminated.<sup>1026</sup> The FCS was officially rescinded through an acquisition decision memorandum (ADM) that also disrupted the development of the Non-Line-of-Sight Cannon (NLOS-C) so prominently displayed in videos supporting the program. To replace the FCS and to supposedly achieve full spectrum dominance, the U.S. Army is instead pursuing a BCT modernization program that is more "versatile" and will "leverage mobility, protection, information, and precision fires to conduct effective operations across the spectrum of conflict."<sup>1027</sup> Like the FCS, the BCT modernization program is supposed to support the Army's imperatives by bringing the Army "back into balance by the year 2011."<sup>1028</sup>

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<sup>1025</sup> TACOM, Future Combat Systems, TACOM, FCS Case 04-076, 26 August 2004.

<sup>1026</sup> Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), Future Combat System (FCS) Program Transitions to Army Brigade Combat Team Modernization, U.S. Department of Defense, 23 June 2009. See also, Osborn, Kris and John Bennett, "FCS Takes Big Hit," The Army Times, 20 April 2009, p. 8. Scales concurs, "Dominance in the close tactical fight is dependent as much on human as technological factors." Scales, Robert H., "Infantry and National Priorities," Armed Forces Journal, December 2007.

<sup>1027</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1028</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army's Modernization Strategy, Memorandum, 2008.

The BCT modernization program, although it expands the size and inherent interoperability of the U.S. Army's combat systems, is not a significant departure from previous transformative visions predating the attacks of 9/11. Arquilla contends that "While there was agreement about the need for more units, once again there was spirited debate about just what size and shape they should be. And once again the traditionalists triumphed, and the lessons of Enduring Freedom were neglected. Instead of a radical redesign centered on small units, closely interconnected with friendly indigenous forces, the choice was made to create more brigades—albeit slightly different looking ones, in the form of 'brigade combat teams' (BCTs)."<sup>1029</sup> Instead of applying the many lessons learned from tactical organizational adaptation in Iraq and elsewhere regarding the capabilities that accrue to smaller units empowered with technology and the freedom to maneuver independently, the U.S. Army remains wedded to the concept of larger, combat oriented tactical structures. And, despite experiences and revolutionary tactical innovations, the continued research and development of advanced digitization, sensors, and communications are not intended to expand the capabilities of the adaptive force that has emerged over the past 7 years but instead are intended to revitalize the force as it has existed for decades. "Many in the Pentagon hope these developments will keep big units strong, even though every technological advance along these lines is actually empowering smaller formations."<sup>1030</sup> If the U.S. Army switched the B (in BCT) from brigade to battalion or if the Army truly believed in the power of networking displayed in Iraq, then it would be possible to strengthen smaller units of more utility in current and likely future operations, regardless of the foe faced. As Arquilla argues, "Here the greatest gains could be made, conveying to the U.S.

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<sup>1029</sup> Arquilla, John, Op Cit, p. 43.

<sup>1030</sup> Ibid, p. 54.

Army a hitherto undreamed of operational capacity. In the war against widely distributed small terror cells, this new organizational structure would give us much more ability to seize and hold the initiative, mounting raid after raid against their training camps and their units in the field.”<sup>1031</sup> This capacity could also prove effective against slow moving and state-based HIC forces as well. But any shift towards a multi-capable force is unlikely as the Army continues to pursue rebalancing through its Transformation program.

The U.S. Army’s vision of future war is still bound to the legacy of the institution even though, as Peters argues, “There is not a single enemy in existence or on the horizon willing to play the victim to the military we continue to build at crippling expense.”<sup>1032</sup> This legacy endured, almost unscathed, throughout OEF and OIF and will survive well into the future. “In its budget requests DoD continued to pour money into costly programs with questionable value in today’s and tomorrow’s likely campaigns. Although the extrabudgetary supplemental appropriations did help to cover the costs of ongoing operations, such funds were never intended to develop a general capability to conduct counterinsurgency. Most disturbingly, even these supplementals were at times used to fund conventional weapons systems unrelated to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.”<sup>1033</sup> These weapons systems are more powerful, networked, and interoperable with other U.S. Army combat systems but do little to contribute to full spectrum capabilities. The real intent of their designers is to integrate higher levels of firepower into more mobile combat units. Accomplishing this feat obviates the need for echeloned support from

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<sup>1031</sup> Ibid, p. 47.

<sup>1032</sup> Peters, Ralph, “The Counterrevolution in Military Affairs,” Weekly Standard, 6 February 2006.

<sup>1033</sup> Ucko, David H., *The New Counterinsurgency Era*, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC, 2009, p. 173.

traditional corps and division fires and support units. The end result is combat capable brigades operating independently or in tandem without tether to cumbersome and largely static higher headquarters support elements and logistical bases.

Macgregor contends that the concept of breaking down larger combat units into smaller combat units—from division to brigade—does little to advance any real transformative effort: “chopping up the existing division into smaller pieces does not change the current warfighting paradigm, reduce or eliminate echelons of unneeded C2, or advance jointness on the operational level where it must be seamless.”<sup>1034</sup> The standard division configuration being replaced by a new Modular Force<sup>1035</sup> of BCTs is merely a reshuffling of the deck chairs. As Crane argues:

*“The current BCT structure where you have this division to fight the HIC in the Fulda Gap and then you modularized the pieces for it and you end up with BCTs that can do a great job of fighting in the Fulda Gap. That is what they are designed to do. They have a lot of combat power in them.”*<sup>1036</sup>

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<sup>1034</sup> MacGregor, Douglas, Army Transformation: Implications for the Future, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, 15 July 2004.

<sup>1035</sup> The Modular Force consists of the Unit of Execution y (Uey), the Unit of Execution x (Uex), and the Brigade Combat Team. “These three levels of command and control are equivalent to an Army, Corps and Division, and Brigade or Regiment. Additionally, Units of Action (UAs) at the theater (Uey level) is recognized as part of the Modular Army.” Parks, Timothy D., Full Spectrum Forces or Special Purpose Forces? A Strategic Decision, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 26 May 2005, p. 29.

<sup>1036</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad C., Personal Interview, 5 November 2008.



Divisions are effectively being collapsed into brigades with greater combat capabilities than the typical legacy brigade. “The centerpiece of the Modular Force is the consolidated redesign of the Army’s various BCTs into 3 standard fixed designs: Heavy BCT, Infantry BCT, and Stryker BCT. Design features include: only two combined arms maneuver battalions; a reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition battalion; a smaller, but organic artillery battalion; an organic forward support battalion; and a brigade troops battalion that contains some additional combat support such as military police, engineers, chemical and military intelligence. In general, the BCT is a fixed organization optimized for combat operations.”<sup>1037</sup> Ironically, the modular BCT might be less capable of conducting full spectrum operations because of how CS and CSS units are being trimmed to make the BCT smaller thus retaining scant organic support capabilities. The trend towards making the U.S. Army almost solely combat capable (with the reduction of CS and CSS units and the progressive rise of contractors to fill the gap) continues. “Confronted with an unaffordable structure and tough decisions, the Army is again resorting to its old ways. The current plan reduces the number of support brigades in the active force in order to retain the full 43 active component BCTs. Consequently, the Army’s active structure is designed to provide the combat forces necessary for two near-simultaneous major combat operations, but without the capacity to concurrently conduct progressive stabilization.”<sup>1038</sup>

The creation of the modularized BCT within the modularized force seems to belie the doctrinal logic supporting its creation. The new Field Manual 3.0, Operations, ostensibly raises the importance of stability operations to the same level as offensive and defensive operations but it is doubtful that modularized BCTs will be nearly as capable of achieving similar levels of all

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<sup>1037</sup> Watson, Brian G., Op Cit, p. 12.

<sup>1038</sup> Ibid, p. 16.

three types of operations. Stability, by design, will take a distant third position in the ordering of capabilities achievable by the BCT, otherwise there would be more organic stability capabilities in these units. Crane contends that:

*“If we are really going to put stability operations at the same level as combat operations then we should have more capability for stability operations in these BCTs.”*<sup>1039</sup>

Watson concurs: “The present course of the Modular Force effort seems, however, to discount the importance of generating the viable stabilization capability that is essential to future expeditionary campaigns. Specifically, Army Modularity fails in three areas: 1) it has not focused on providing the modular and scalable force pool of stabilization capabilities that can augment brigade combat teams; 2) it does not provide the land force with a multifunctional brigade capable of exercising mission command for area-wide stabilization efforts to free forward BCTs for maneuver; and 3) it does not generate an adequate mix of modular brigades within the active and reserve components given the characteristics of future land campaigns.”<sup>1040</sup>

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<sup>1039</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad, C., Personal Interview, 5 November 2008. See also, Watson, Brian G., Op Cit.

<sup>1040</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

### 8.3.3 Stability Operations and the Legacy Mindset

Visibly, the legacy mindset still weighs heavily on strategic thought and influences force planning and structuring. The stability of the legacy is evidenced in almost slavish alliance and partnership retention premised on relationships formed during the Cold War, which have much less relevance in the post-9/11 international security environment as former partners' interests and capabilities have evolved on different trajectories and as threat perceptions have changed dramatically.<sup>1041</sup> The stability of the legacy is also evidenced—in the form of desired capability that would free U.S. Army forces for combat operations—in the assumption that the much ballyhooed and oft cited as a panacea “interagency” process will fix itself and will replace the U.S. Army in the role of strategic conductor of durable stability operations. Where fixes haven't been made, the problem has been structurally ignored. “Much of our government and interagency seems to be in a state of denial about the requirements needed to adapt to modern warfare.”<sup>1042</sup> It has even been suggested that legacy divisions, or their combat-centric BCT replacements, can be retained if the U.S. Army were to create some form of constabulary stability divisions. There are five obvious drawbacks to the creation of stability divisions: 1) even 2 new stability divisions would not have been sufficient in Iraq; 2) stability divisions, although they would absorb an enormous amount of personnel, would not be anywhere near as capable of conducting MCO as regular units; 3) they would be almost constantly deployed with

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<sup>1041</sup> See, Daskal, Steven E., Changing the Paradigm of the War, 7 November 2003, Accessed 18 October 2008, [http://www.d-n-i.net/fcs/daskal\\_changing\\_paradigms.htm](http://www.d-n-i.net/fcs/daskal_changing_paradigms.htm).

<sup>1042</sup> Chiarelli, Peter W. and Stephen M. Smith, *Op Cit*, p. 3. Interagency projects can often have deleterious effects or result in pyrrhic victories. See, Cragin, Kim and Peter Chalk, *Op Cit*, 2003.

no substitutable counterparts, 4) as the requirement for simultaneous full spectrum operations in Iraq demonstrated, stability is no longer a singular and sequential mission and; 5) since operational phases have less and less relevance in the post-9/11 security environment and since threat organizations don't seem to respect the sequential conceptualization of combat success then withdrawal paradigm, it would be very difficult indeed to determine when stability divisions or brigades would take over for traditional combat units, or vice versa:<sup>1043</sup>

*“Some people ask: shouldn’t we have constabulary divisions or COIN divisions? I say that you have to have organizations that can do multiple tasks because the enemy is going to shift on the ground. Even if you have a constabulary division that is trained to do peacekeeping missions, you never have enough. So, when that unit’s rotation is up you have to replace them and then you have to put a conventional unit in there anyways. You might as well have multi-purpose units.”*<sup>1044</sup>

In the current international security environment, constabulary stability divisions would be less useful than a multi-capable force, would not be capable of conducting simultaneous full

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<sup>1043</sup> For a discussion of the utility in creating a stability force see, Andrews, Frank L, A Stability Force: The Missing Link in Achieving Full-Spectrum Dominance, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, April 2004, p. 49. See also John Nagl’s discussion of and recommendation for the creation of a large, standing advisor corps, Nagl, John, Institutionalizing Adaptation: It’s Time for a Permanent Army Advisor Corps, Center for a New American Security, June 2007.

<sup>1044</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad, Personal Interview, 5 November 2008.

spectrum operations, and would prove much easier (because of their limited capabilities) for adversaries to adapt to than a multi-purpose force.

Stability operations have always been subordinated to, if not outright rejected in favor of, combat operations and the U.S. Army has continually sought to shift responsibility for these operations onto erstwhile allies or to a hapless or otherwise nonexistent interagency consortium. Inevitably, these failures lead to serious discussions of constabulary or stability units of various stripes. When these options are cognitively and structurally exhausted or are proven impossible to implement—as was the case in Iraq—military planners then try to engage in these operations indirectly or through host-nation operators. Former Secretary Rumsfeld aptly describes how this was supposed to work in Iraq: “Anyone who takes those three words and thinks it means the United States should clear and the United States should hold and the United States should build doesn’t understand the situation. It is the Iraqis’ country. They’ve got 28 million people there. They are clearing, they are holding, they are building. They’re going to be the ones doing the reconstruction in that country...and we do not have—with 160,000 troops there—the idea that we could do that is so far from reality. Nor was there any intention that we should do that.”<sup>1045</sup> Where host-nation forces don’t exist, military planners then try to create them from whole cloth, usually in the most rapid fashion possible (as was tried in Iraq up until and through the issuance of the NSVI and is now suggested for Afghanistan).<sup>1046</sup> But instead of this job falling to the historically most qualified organization in the services, SF, this responsibility inescapably falls upon regular forces that have the least (until recently) historical experience in developing cadres

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<sup>1045</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald H. and Peter Pace, Department of Defense News Transcript, 29 November 2005.

<sup>1046</sup> The 2006 QDR suggests that insurgents and terrorists could be combated by local security forces trained and equipped by the U.S. military, particularly its SF.

of ‘host-nation’ fighters. The perpetual shift away from full spectrum capabilities, across the government but most acutely in the U.S. Army, has paradoxically corrupted even the possibility of transferring responsibility for stability operations to any other agency, be it foreign or domestic. Strategy demands various stability skill sets and missions regardless of service preferences and whether or not host-nation forces exist or are even available.

In spite of the strategic need and despite not wanting the task of providing stability and doing everything possible to shift this responsibility to existent but incapable agencies or non-existent partners, the DOD and, because of its size and terrestrial responsibilities,<sup>1047</sup> the U.S. Army, are stuck with this mission. As Ucko argues, “history has shown that DoD’s preference for indirect engagement in irregular operations has not precluded the eventual deployment of U.S. troops, by the president, for stability and counterinsurgency operations. A failure to internalize this historically consistent fact has contributed to the U.S. military being less than

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<sup>1047</sup> “The primary functions of the Army, as outlined in Department of Defense Directive 5100.1, are to organize, equip, and train forces for the conduct of prompt and sustained combat operations on land.” It is hard to determine if the use of the term ‘combat’ is meant to include stability operations or not. But since stability operations, however relegated as an afterthought, are part of full spectrum operations, and since it is the U.S. Army’s responsibility to be able to conduct ‘sustained’ operations of all sorts on land, they must be included. See England, Gordon, *Op Cit*, p. xi. Additionally, “The United States is currently engaged in two large-scale counterinsurgency/counterterrorism wars and maintains small but long-term presences in two peacekeeping operations (Kosovo and the Sinai). It is committed to a long-term deterrence/engagement mission in South Korea, and is engaged in global counterterrorism effort against al Qaeda. The sum of these ongoing deployments weighs disproportionately on the ground forces.” Donnelly, Thomas and Frederick W. Kagan, *Op Cit*, pp. 37-38.

ready for such missions.”<sup>1048</sup> The indirect approach, although compelling if an organization is uninterested in or incapable of conducting anything other than combat operations, is inherently flawed: “First, there is only so much that can be achieved through the deployment of SOF: Their numbers and—in the case of the U.S. military—markedly combat-oriented disposition render these elite forces ill suited to the sustained provision of security in contested areas and to the engagement in ‘softer’ advisory and nonmilitary tasks, particularly if on a large scale. Second, the employment of local security forces as surrogates clearly relies on such forces’ existence and their ability to conduct operations as wanted.”<sup>1049</sup> Thus, using SF for this purpose is an unlikely solution. Even more damning to the indirect approach as a solution is the fact that the U.S. Army gets tasked with stability and counterinsurgency operations in areas specifically because no indigenous security forces exist. This was true in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and just about anywhere else where full spectrum capabilities were needed and is likely to be true in future operations as well. Enduring legacy preferences and visions have put the U.S. Army (and thus the whole of U.S. forces) in the bizarre position of having to conduct a task that it has done everything in its power to avoid but still has responsibility for despite having less capacity than ever for its completion. “Today, the U.S. military is the only national organization able to conduct some of the most critical tasks associated with rebuilding war-torn or failed nations. Indeed, since the end of the cold war, the capabilities of some of the interagency organizations

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<sup>1048</sup> Ucko, David H., *The New Counterinsurgency Era*, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC, 2009, p. 175.

<sup>1049</sup> Ibid.

that have traditionally played a large role in nation-building have decreased dramatically, even as the requirement to conduct these operations has multiplied.”<sup>1050</sup>

#### **8.3.4 Transformation of the Legacy**

The promises of the Transformation program never bore fruit when exposed to actual operations against real adversaries in uncontrolled environments. “This image of war transformed derived from—but also meshed with and seemed to validate—the technology-hyped mood prevailing during the final decade of the twentieth century. By common consent, the defining characteristics of this age were speed, control, and choice. Information empowered the individual. It reduced the prevalence of chance and surprise and random occurrences. Everything relevant could be known and, if known, could be taken into account. In the computer age, even when something ‘crashed,’ no one got hurt and nothing was damaged. The expected result was to lessen, if not eliminate, uncertainty, risk, waste, and error and to produce quantum improvements in efficiency and effectiveness.”<sup>1051</sup> Although information did empower the individual in OIF and OEF, chance, surprise, seemingly random occurrences, uncertainty, and risk all prevailed upon operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Efficiency and effectiveness were reduced as the Army transformed away from strategic requirements, away from full spectrum capability, and along a glide path towards an imagined conventional combat utopia. Even in the wake of vast institutional experience in simultaneous full spectrum operations requiring mass

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<sup>1050</sup> Chiarelli, Peter W. and Stephen M. Smith, *Op Cit*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>1051</sup> Bacevich, Andrew J., *The New American Militarism: How Americans are Seduced by War*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, p. 21.



organizational adaptation, the legacy and Transformation still persist. Organizational design has only changed in the margins and really only for the enhancement of combat capabilities. Successful experimentation and innovation in the field has been rejected for the institutional canon of doctrine supporting large units functioning in combat roles.

In discussing Transformation Krepinevich recommends field exercises and experimentation to identify the proper mix of legacy systems and innovations derived from these systems: “to identify the proper mix of new and legacy systems required to meet emerging challenges, one would expect the administration to give new life, and far greater emphasis, to Service and joint transformation exercises oriented principally at the operational level of warfare.”<sup>1052</sup> This is exactly what occurred in Iraq and Afghanistan as operational and tactical level operations occurred on a regular basis in the latter and a daily basis in the former. But once presented with the results of this experimentation, Transformation proceeded along the same course with little interruption. Doctrine, force structure, and the interpretation of strategic requirements have all suffered as a result. “History shows a more balanced approach would combine the search for improved technologic capabilities with equal vigor in improved operational and organizational design, honed experimentation and critical self-assessment. Instead, Army Transformation has resulted in the migration of future concepts to current doctrine, force structure changes are currently driving the need to create more units to satisfy overseas commitments; the few experiments that occur are manipulated to make future vision a

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<sup>1052</sup> Krepinevich, Andrew, “The Bush Administration’s Call for Defense Transformation: A Congressional Guide,” CSBA, 21 June 2002.

current ‘reality,’ and critical thinking is rejected in favor of the inculcation of transformation dogma.”<sup>1053</sup>

In 2002, General Dubik wrote that “War never discards a proven tactic or weapon. War is patient; it waits for another opportunity to use ‘what worked’ before. *Mutatis mutandis*, the old Latin phrase says: ‘the more things change, the more they remain the same.’”<sup>1054</sup> The same could be applied to the Army’s legacy and Transformation program in the wake of OEF and OIF but with a twist: Transformation never discards a disproven tactic or operational concept and despite how much things change, Transformation will remain the same. A risible but useful account from Afghanistan in 2002 demonstrates just how interested the U.S. Army was in returning to its legacy operations and protocols. “U.S. special operations forces in Afghanistan have been ordered to shave and wear regular uniforms to look more like U.S. soldiers rather than locals, according to an official at the U.S. Special Operations Command in Tampa, Florida...The decision came after the perception that the grooming standard of the troops was out of hand and that the time had passed for the need of the soldiers to blend in.”<sup>1055</sup> This is an interesting anecdote for an Army in Transformation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and foreshadowed an inexorable drive towards Transformation irrespective of adversaries, experience, or strategy. Preferences and dogma propelled by institutional inertia would not go off course and proceeded with almost absolute indifference to changes in the international security environment and strategic requirements.

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<sup>1053</sup> Calhoun, Mark T., Op Cit, p. 66.

<sup>1054</sup> Dubik, James M. “Has Warfare Changed? Sorting Apples from Oranges,” Landpower Essay, Number 02-3, Institute of Land Warfare Publication, July 2002, p. 4.

<sup>1055</sup> Mount, Mike, “Close Shave for Special Ops Forces in Afghanistan,” CNN, 13 September 2002.

The Transformation program, prior to 9/11 and now, assumes a static if not entirely conventional enemy is always looming on the horizon. At one time, this made at least some semblance of sense: “Before 9/11, the services could make a plausible case that in the absence of any specific enemy, their time was best spent preparing to defeat a worst-case peer adversary in the next big war.”<sup>1056</sup> This thinking not only confuses the definition of the threat but it also mistakes the increasingly blurred line between conventional and unconventional and single band and full spectrum for a clearly delineated boundary. These operations are not so dissimilar or neatly separated anymore and the definition of each has changed. “Some armchair generals, legacy-thinking academics, and poorly informed professionals may say that we will not conduct UW in modern times. They think that if you don’t parachute into occupied territory, link up with a partisan group, and overthrow an occupying army like the OSS [Office Strategic Services] did six decades ago, it is not UW.”<sup>1057</sup> Moreover, U.S. strategic decisions and actions (or inactions) drive adversary responses. The U.S. military does not operate in a vacuum and adversaries are not inert. Demonstrating an inability and unwillingness to confront unconventional threat organizations is one ingredient in a recipe for making these adversaries appear more often and in more conspicuous forms. “Our own actions and strategic choices will drive the nature of the asymmetric threat. As we refine operational practices, potential adversaries will look to find ways to counter. This process of action-reaction is inescapable. Responses by potential adversaries will come from two broad currents: their specific operations and historical-military heritage and outlook, and their reaction to the nature of the perceived threat from the United

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<sup>1056</sup> Waghelstein, John D., “What’s Wrong in Iraq or Ruminations of a Pachyderm,” *Military Review*, January-February 2006, p. 117.

<sup>1057</sup> Bogart III, Adrian T., *Op Cit*, p. 3.

States.”<sup>1058</sup> Another ingredient in this mix is continued proclamations indicating that the U.S. Army is uninterested in non-standard or unconventional missions in the future. For instance, from the U.S. Army’s 2008 Modernization Strategy: “We cannot mortgage the future to support the current fight. We must restore balance and build readiness through modernization for Soldiers both now and in the future.”<sup>1059</sup> As Ancker suggests, “Dealing with the unexpected requires rapid adjustment to the actual situation.”<sup>1060</sup> Certainly, the opposite holds true for adversaries: dealing with the expected requires almost no adjustment to the actual situation. And creating the expected is what the Transformation and modernization program is seemingly all about.

### **8.3.5 Transcendent Effects of the Legacy**

The stability of the legacy signifies not only the inertia of the U.S. Army as an institution insofar as it “has developed over time a singular focus on conventional warfare”<sup>1061</sup> but also that it is rejecting the hard won organizational adaptations painfully conducted in Iraq that made the force more full spectrum capable than perhaps it had ever been. Despite witnessing firsthand the adaptive struggles the U.S. Army went through to achieve organizational goals and objectives in Iraq, then Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld published the following proclamation in the 2006

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<sup>1058</sup> McKenzie, Kenneth F., “The Revenge of the Melians: Asymmetric Threats and the Next QDR,” McNair Paper #62, National Defense University, 2000, p. 11.

<sup>1059</sup> Headquarters Department of the Army, Army’s Modernization Strategy, 2008, p. 79.

<sup>1060</sup> Ancker, Clinton J., “Doctrine for Asymmetric Warfare,” Military Review, July-August 2003, p. 22.

<sup>1061</sup> Alwin-Foster, Nigel, “Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations,” Military Review, November-December 2005, p. 9.

QDR: “The ability of the future force to establish an ‘unblinking eye’ over the battle-space through persistent surveillance will be key to conducting effective joint operations. Future capabilities in ISR [Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance], including those operating in space, will support operations against any target, day or night, in any weather, and in denied or contested areas.”<sup>1062</sup> Any target, day or night, in any weather, and in denied or contested areas implies a capacity that has not been achieved against targets yet availing themselves. The future, in legacy terms, always seems to be just that, the future: it has its own relativity and never quite follows the strictures of time to become the present.

Preference for a return to the pre-OIF balance and pre-OIF full spectrum capabilities is not difficult to understand given how difficult true full spectrum missions are to accomplish and given how these missions put the U.S. Army at the center of operational attention in defiance of joint requirements and a supposed interest in conducting joint operations. Pre-OIF full spectrum dominance is what the U.S. Army has historically excelled at and would again like to excel at in the future; the other service chiefs would like this as well. Conversely, post-OIF full spectrum capabilities and full spectrum dominance imply a set of training, doctrine, and skills that are difficult to discern and would likely require significant organizational adaptation to achieve, no matter what structural changes are made in the foreseeable future. Determining the meaning of full spectrum capable seems necessary for determining what direction the U.S. Army will be going in and how long it will take to get there. If official proclamations, statements before Congress, and doctrine are the Rosetta stone for this decipherment, then it seems that the pre-

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<sup>1062</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald H., Quadrennial Defense Review Report, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 6 February 2006, p. 55.

9/11 definition of full spectrum capable obtains and the U.S. Army will continue a gradual shift back towards a combat-centric force. But this remains to be seen.

Outside of the related definition of full spectrum dominance, it is difficult to determine what the term ‘full spectrum capable’ means. Supposedly, the force that was sent to Afghanistan and later Iraq was full spectrum capable because of its technical capacities: this was disproven rather profoundly by sheiks, warlords, militias, criminal entrepreneurs, insurgents for hire, no less than 4 years of rampant instability in Iraq, and a solid 3 years of organizational adaptation to influence strategy enough to align it with tactical success. “During the conventional phase of combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, network centric warfare showed great promise; but in subsequent phases, the technology and operational concepts have been of little utility in fighting insurgencies and terrorist movements. To support the nation’s policies effectively, the military must continue to pursue a wide range of emerging technologies and not become so enamored with a single technological concept that it forsakes other capabilities.”<sup>1063</sup> But shifting the Army’s focus to the lower end of the spectrum apparently did not expand full spectrum capabilities either, “this recent focus of training on the lower end of the spectrum of conflict in stability and reconstruction operations has come at the cost of training preparation for more traditional threats, and the Army’s ability to attack and defend. Neglecting training for conflict on the higher end of the spectrum of conflict degrades the Army’s ability to conduct full

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<sup>1063</sup> Reynolds, Kevin, Defense Transformation: to What, for What?, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, November 2006, p. 2.

spectrum operations.”<sup>1064</sup> Being full spectrum capable then is a matter of perspective: one perspective holds true in garrison and peacetime training against possible enemies and the other holds true in conflict against actual enemies. Neither is assured in the future as the U.S. Army continues to transform and rebalance itself.

It seems as if the combat-centric full spectrum capable proponents are winning despite DOD leadership that is pushing for a different outcome. Secretary Gates has repeatedly made the case for expanding the capability of the forces across the spectrum and for learning from experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan: “Even the biggest wars will require ‘small wars’ capabilities.”<sup>1065</sup> He also argues that while “having a military skilled in fighting major conventional ground wars is essential...such a war is unlikely in the near future.”<sup>1066</sup> He continues by adding that “the Pentagon has placed comparatively too much emphasis on developing high-technology weapon systems aimed at potential state adversaries such as China or Russia that take years to develop” noting that the 2009 budget contains more than \$180 billion for such conventional systems.<sup>1067</sup> Despite Gates’ stewardship and management, many in U.S. Army leadership positions make a powerful contrarian case and continue to follow the standard prescriptions of the legacy.<sup>1068</sup> Change is difficult for any entrenched organization and the risk

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<sup>1064</sup> Hawkins, Jerome K., Training Balance: Full Spectrum Operations for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 22 May 2008, p. 37.

<sup>1065</sup> Gates, Robert M., Op Cit, p. 30.

<sup>1066</sup> Tyson, Ann Scott, Op Cit, p. 4.

<sup>1067</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>1068</sup> Wipfli and Metz contend that “Even the military is not fully committed to transforming for the COIN mission. As the Army and Marine Corps increase in size, they will simply add more units of existing types.”

for failure or in making the wrong change when your organization is charged with provisioning national defense can be at first daunting and then potentially catastrophic. “Often it is said that it is more difficult to expel an old idea than to introduce a new one. Because we only have one army, we cannot afford to deprogram our regulars, even were such mental surgery possible.”<sup>1069</sup>

The stability of a legacy is natural for any organization, even when confronted with direct evidence that the legacy is roundly unsuitable for current and likely future operations. “If anyone is stunned and amazed that the U.S. Army is having difficulties in Iraq, they should not be. There is seemingly something in the Army’s DNA that historically precludes it from preparing itself for the problems of insurgency or from studying such conflicts in any serious way until the dam breaks.”<sup>1070</sup> But the results of the stability of the legacy are troubling. Warfare, always a messy business, is becoming messier and commonly accepted paradigms for categorizing aspects of warfare are mutating. According to Secretary Gates, “The categories of warfare are blurring and no longer fit into neat, tidy boxes.”<sup>1071</sup> Despite the significant and nearly comprehensive tactical adaptations that the U.S. Army made in Iraq and is making in Afghanistan, it is still locked in a battle to ‘balance’ capabilities with current real missions and with perceived future missions. Balancing to become full spectrum capable truly defies the ostensible definition of the term and confounds the adaptations made in Iraq. Full spectrum

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Wipfli, Ralph, and Steven Metz, COIN of the Realm: U.S. Counterinsurgency Strategy, Colloquium Brief, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 22 October 2007, p. 3.

<sup>1069</sup> Gray, Colin S., “Irregular Warfare: One Nature, Many Characters,” Strategic Studies Quarterly, Winter 2007, p. 47.

<sup>1070</sup> Waghelstein, John D., Op Cit, p. 112.

<sup>1071</sup> Gates, Robert M., Op Cit, p. 33.



capable is as oxymoronic a term now as it was in the past as is the concept and progress of Transformation. “In a culture such as the military, change is a constant. But transformation represents a shift in fundamental rules. That type of shift is not always a comfortable experience for everyone involved. Once the shift has been recognized and made, however, comfort zones return.”<sup>1072</sup> Seemingly, comfort zones never left as the legacy continues to persist.

#### **8.4 THE DEVOLVING STATE AND A RETURN TO NEW/OLD FORMS OF GOVERNANCE AND CONFLICT: IRAQ IS NOT UNIQUE**

Changes in the international security environment make the Iraq conflict less unusual in U.S. security policy and strategy than might otherwise be supposed. Of course, the Iraqi state was destabilized to the point of collapse by the 2003 Coalition invasion, the subsequent dismantling of the state’s security apparatus, and the emergence of a massive, complex insurgency. Nevertheless, the conflict that took place could quite possibly emerge in other states with similar demographic and social characteristics and with or without direct U.S. involvement. Breakdowns in traditional state sovereignty and control in many states are more the norm than the outlier in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Organizations built on traditional relationships and power structures, outside of the control of the state, still exist and in increasingly large numbers. As the conflict in Iraq demonstrates, motivated organizations with the potential to marshal thousands of supporters do not require significant technological resources, modern bureaucracies, advanced

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<sup>1072</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, “Cultural Change,”

[http://www.defenselink.mil/transformation/about\\_transformation.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/transformation/about_transformation.html), accessed 1 October 2009.

logistics, charismatic leadership, or prodigious external funding to foment mass chaos, dislocation, and calamity. Furthermore, these organizations can sow tremendous violence across a wide swath of terrain even in the face of the best resourced and most capable military force in existence. Although not all states are similarly strategically important in U.S. strategy and not all transgressing organizations are similarly disposed or capable, the devolution of states and the rise of complex violent groups with interests in alternative forms of governance is cause for alarm for policymakers and military strategists alike. States have contributed to this possibility by creating the implements for and fostering of the motivation for their own dissolution: technologies for communications, transportation, funding, and information sharing; cheap, available, precise, and incredibly deadly instruments of violence and; significant grievances ranging from apostasy, secularism, revenge, and mass dislocation.

At a minimum, there is enormous potential for instability on nearly every continent and the sources of this instability are manifold. Demographic trends towards urbanization in disparate areas, areas where governments are most incapable of handling significant population growth in terms of infrastructure or employment, do not bode well for stability. “Demography in today’s world makes urban insurgency more frequent. There are more cities today than a hundred years ago, and a larger number of potential rebels live in them. Sites which once were villages or were even unsettled, in one or two generations have become towns and cities: Leopoldville, Aden, Lagunillas, Nha Trang, Limassol. And today’s village could become tomorrow’s town with the population explosion progressing as it is.”<sup>1073</sup> Persistently weak states are expanding to generate weak regions with little hope of reversal. “Many, if not the majority, of weak and failing states will center in Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, the Middle East, and

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<sup>1073</sup> Defense Research Corporation, Op Cit, p. 8.

North Africa. A current list of such states much resembles the lists of such states drawn up a generation ago, suggesting a chronic condition, which, despite considerable aid, provides little hope for solution.”<sup>1074</sup> States cobbled together during the colonial period are fracturing along ethnic, cultural, and religious fault lines despite continuous efforts at unification. “Culturally- and religiously-motivated movements are emphasising ethnic particularities and the preservation of independence and cultural traditions. This increasing trend towards cultural fragmentation based upon sub-cultural identities may clash with opposing movements attempting to force unifications.”<sup>1075</sup> The end of the colonial period coupled with the subsequent end of the Cold War irreversibly released centuries’ worth of cultural and structural tensions. “So think about 300 to 500 years, in some cases 200 years, of European pressure to push the world into the artificial forms they wanted it to be in, and then suddenly remove the pressure. Human societies, from Iraq to Somalia to Nigeria, and well beyond, Indonesia, are trying to find a natural equilibrium again.”<sup>1076</sup> Globalization gives these populations the capacity to find this equilibrium either peacefully or violently but certainly at the expense of the foreign system that they find themselves trapped within.

Max Weber famously asserted that a monopoly on the legitimate means of violence is the defining characteristic of a state. “Control over the use of violence brings three distinctive

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<sup>1074</sup> U.S. Joint Forces Command, *Op Cit*, p. 35.

<sup>1075</sup> Multinational Interoperability Council, *Future Coalition Operating Environment: Interoperability Challenges for the Future, Part I, Version 3.0*, Multinational Interoperability Council, 16 June 2008, p. VII.

<sup>1076</sup> Peters, Ralph, “The Nature of Irregular Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Warfare in the Age of Non-State Actors: Implications for the US Army*, Eds. Gott, Kendall D. and Michael G. Brooks, *The Proceedings of the Combat Studies Institute 2007 Military History Symposium*, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2007, pp. 332-333.

processes together. The first is the establishment of a monopoly over the means of destruction and the use of force. The second is the establishment of the legitimacy needed to subordinate violence to decision making. The third is the use of force, according to certain rules, against those citizens of the state who challenge its legitimacy.”<sup>1077</sup> Where legitimacy is in question, forces, either state-based or more traditional, inevitably come into conflict. When the state cannot control the use of violence or has receded just far enough to allow for surrogate legitimacy three results are possible: 1) an external force either helps to restore the state’s legitimacy and monopoly over the use of violence; 2) non-state organizations establish an alternative form of government that can either resemble a state with centralized functions or be far removed from the state and resemble pre-modern disaggregation of peoples or; 3) there is a complete degeneration of any social order as it is commonly recognized. Kaplan argues that “A predominant socio-political trend will be a dynamic tension between the continuing struggle for democratisation and the desire to maintain alternative systems of governance.”<sup>1078</sup> In an age where “democracy and technology will make the world more complex, more unstable,”<sup>1079</sup> this can be dangerous for existing states, whole regions, and perhaps eventually, formal global governance.

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<sup>1077</sup> Ghani, Ashraf and Claire Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008, p. 128.

<sup>1078</sup> Multinational Interoperability Council, *Op Cit*, p. VII.

<sup>1079</sup> Kaplan, Robert D., “The New Evils of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Essay Presented at the Conference of Midwest Consortium for International Security Studies, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Midwest Center, Chicago, IL, December 1997, p. 17.

The international security environment is in an unprecedented state of flux. If, as Smith claims, populations that accept collective security and cooperation amongst states are set against “large, encapsulated pockets of culture and ideology that have little real stake in the modern state solution,”<sup>1080</sup> then strategies that only treat the former while ignoring the latter are myopic at best and suicidal at worst. And if the disorder that characterizes weak states and feral cities does spread to the developed world, as Williams warns is possible, then strategists are right to reject intervention in or concern for these areas: this enemy will come to them soon enough.<sup>1081</sup>

#### **8.4.1 The Absence of the State**

The disintegration or absence of state power has led to what Kaldor describes as ‘New Wars’. New Wars are conducted by state and non-state actors, battle is rare, violence is directed at civilians, distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate break down, and sectarian identifications flourish. New Wars undermine a shared political identity and “recreate the sense of political community along new divisive lines through the manufacture of fear and hate.”<sup>1082</sup> Conflicts in places like Bosnia and Somalia typify the types of wars that Kaldor describes. Although, as Little argues, “The state remains the main means of international validation, either

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<sup>1080</sup> Smith, Anton K., *Beyond Iraq: The Lessons of a Hard Place*, USAWC Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 30 March 2007, pp. 2-3.

<sup>1081</sup> Williams, Phil, *From the New Middle Ages to a New Dark Age: The Decline of the State and U.S. Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2008, p. 31.

<sup>1082</sup> Kaldor, Mary, “Old Wars, Cold Wars, New Wars, and the War on Terror,” *International Politics*, 2005, pp. 492-493.

by governments or international organizations,”<sup>1083</sup> other actors are gaining increasing importance as state controls weaken, disintegrate, or are abandoned in favor of more traditional or alternative forms of governance. Visions and strategies that fail to account for these differences or blindly adhere to notions of governance as it existed between the conclusion of World War II and the end of the Cold War, also fail to recognize non-state adversaries for what they really are: challenges to the prevailing global order.<sup>1084</sup> Despite wide acceptance by states, the modern state system is hardly an accepted form of governance by all peoples. Tribal governance and other forms of localism and even regional governance are rapidly returning to prominence. “The modern states system growing out of European history, which fixed borders as a means to limit conflict, established the ground rules for diplomacy and interaction of peoples, and imbued those states with a monopoly on the use of violence, remains far from universal acceptance.”<sup>1085</sup>

Where the state has broken down and where alternative forms of governance have taken its place, modern methods for quelling violence and sowing order no longer work very well; the architecture required by these methods disintegrates along with the state. Weak states not only provide haven to nefarious groups they also progressively fail to provide many of the tools

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<sup>1083</sup> Little, Peter D., Op Cit, p. 167.

<sup>1084</sup> For an in depth discussion see, Williams, Phil, From the New Middle Ages to a New Dark Age: The Decline of the State and U.S. Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2008, p. 5.

<sup>1085</sup> Smith, Anton K., Op Cit, p.2. In fact, al Qaeda and other groups are not interested in governing states but instead are interested in the ability to exercise a state’s power in the vacuum created by its absence. See, Robb, John, Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ.

necessary for combating these groups. Traditional doctrines for returning state control within its geographical boundaries require at least a semblance of state-based forces and at a minimum an echo of bureaucratic competency or experience. Without these forces and capacities, foreign intervention to restore even the façade of a modern state will either fail or will be prohibitively costly. But what remains of these state apparatuses after a gradual or rapid breakdown diminish even further as control is progressively divested and as power accrues to sub-state groups and individuals. “A weak and dysfunctional government is particularly important, because in such cases even small groups can effectively use violence without being shut down by the government. Indeed, the very shortcomings of the regimes often are major reasons for the existence of an insurgency. Thus, at times the very causes of insurgency also create problems for fighting it.”<sup>1086</sup> The more protracted a state’s decline and the further alternative forms of governance are allowed to progress, the less likely any restorative intervention is to be successful and the more likely that groups hostile to internationally accepted norms, customs, and laws will have the opportunity to flourish.

According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) “Fragile states have long posed a problem for the United States and are now recognized as a source of our nation’s most pressing security threats.”<sup>1087</sup> This problem grows more pernicious as non-state adversaries realize the benefits of globalization for funding, information transfer, communications, proselytization, and travel. Diminishing state control further enables and even empowers sub-state actors and ideologies to emerge: “Added to the destruction of the state is the

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<sup>1086</sup> Byman, Daniel L., “Friends Like These: Counterinsurgency and the War of Terrorism,” *International Security*, Volume 31, Number 2, 2006, p. 102.

<sup>1087</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development, *Fragile States Strategy*, January 2005, p. 11.

prominence of identity politics, whether nationalist, tribalist, or communalist. In the absence of state institutions, organization around ethnic or family identity may be the only form left for collective action.”<sup>1088</sup> States are interested in order and require the presence and acquiescence of other states to maintain order. As Echevarria argues, “globalization seems to aid the nonstate actor more than the state, but states still play a central role in the support or defeat of terrorist groups or insurgencies.”<sup>1089</sup> Strategies and doctrine to defeat or quell violent non-state actors and organizations require the support of other states, particularly states hosting these actors and organizations. The state, as a form of governance, is therefore a critical part of any strategic interest in international order. Thus, a declining state’s ‘statehood’ must be supported prior to or early on in the processional breakdown of normal state apparatuses and the rise of sub-state groups. Otherwise, maintaining a state-based order will be progressively more difficult to achieve and strategies and force packages based on the existence of this order will become less and less relevant.

#### **8.4.2 Civilians and Urbanization: Why Weak States Matter to Security**

Military operations increasingly occur amongst populations in urban areas. Military forces are drawn into cities because the world is increasingly urbanizing and because seemingly ubiquitous

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<sup>1088</sup> Benedict, Kennette, “International Relations in the Global Village,” Essay Presented at the Conference of the Midwest Consortium for International Security Studies, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Midwest Center, Chicago, IL, December 1997, pp. 118-119.

<sup>1089</sup> Echevarria, Antulio J., *Fourth-Generation War and Other Myths*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, November 2005, p. vi. See also, Echevarria, Antulio J., *Globalization and the Nature of War*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, March 2003, p. 21.



non-state adversaries take advantage of urban terrain and environments that suit their operations and keep them close to their lines of support and provision. While still possible, seemingly gone are the days of force marching infantry divisions into the face of dug in opposing forces and open terrain tank battles. Although geographical terrain is still used when advantageous, as it was in Vietnam and is in Afghanistan and elsewhere, combatants are increasingly using urban terrain to mask, support, and complicate operations. “By 2030, greater than 60 percent of the world’s population is expected to live in urban areas.”<sup>1090</sup> Where these populations choose to live or will live, violent non-state actors and organizations will assuredly follow.

Urbanization, particularly in poorer or less developed nations, lends to creeping disorder and the emergence of alternative forms of justice and governance based on local preferences, allegiances, loyalties, or identities. Urban disorder is the product of individuals and groups being dislocated from traditional ways of life and of states being less capable of providing or unwilling to provide support to these populations in the form of improved infrastructure, opportunities for upward mobility, or expanded social services. Moreover, “Formal state institutions provide only a minority of the justice and security service in fragile states.”<sup>1091</sup> Disorder arises in the absence of the state but is replaced in many instances by alternative forms of order. In the long term, alternative forms of order and governance lead to a further weakening of the state and the greater legitimization of sub-state organizational controls. “So long as there is a continued juxtaposition between concentrations of people and the absence of services and opportunities, the trends towards urban disorder and the rise of alternative forms of governance are likely to continue and

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<sup>1090</sup> Multinational Interoperability Council, *Op Cit*, p. VII.

<sup>1091</sup> Scheye, Eric, and Louise Andersen, “Conclusion,” *Fragile States and Insecure People?*, Eds. Louise Andersen, Bjorn Noller, and Finn Stepputat, Palgrave, NY, 2007, p. 231.

even intensify.”<sup>1092</sup> Mass groupings of disaffected people tend to adopt the forms of governance most available to them, despite state preferences that they would do otherwise. “Impoverished, poorly educated people do not make good democrats. They are too easily manipulated by the powerful, and the choices they make are seldom in the collective best interest.”<sup>1093</sup> In some cases, the powerful don’t even have to manipulate the population; it might be a willing participant in or supporter of the prevailing alternative form of governance. “Sometimes non-state providers are the choice of first resort, because the values embedded in the non-state justice and security systems correspond more closely to those held by the citizenry, whereas state systems are considered to house foreign principles and standards and are, therefore, to be shunned.”<sup>1094</sup>

Urban environments are complicated mazes of buildings, infrastructure, and people. Urban settings can be confusing and daunting to outsiders while at the same time they can provide comfort, protection, and cover to those familiar with their environs. In Iraq, towns and cities provided actors “both the personal anonymity of the big city and the impenetrability of closed neighbourhood-based social groups, making the task of finding individuals difficult and forcing the coalition to rely on informers and denunciations.”<sup>1095</sup> This is true for most congested or urban environments where civilians are massed and outsiders are quickly recognized and denied access to the social networks that connect the city’s people and organizations. Networks

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<sup>1092</sup> Williams, Phil, *From the New Middle Ages to a New Dark Age: The Decline of the State and U.S. Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2008, p. 25.

<sup>1093</sup> Smith, Anton K., *Op Cit*, p. 7.

<sup>1094</sup> Scheye, Eric, and Louise Andersen, *Op Cit*, p. 231.

<sup>1095</sup> Knights, Michael and Jeffrey White, *Op Cit*, pp. 20-21.

of civilians can be impenetrable to outsiders, can enhance the difficulties of conducting operations in urban environments, can be an asset to whichever group or person commands their allegiance, might reject interference from a less-than-legitimate state or foreign force, and invariably complicate actions or operations, either directly or passively, where they live and work. Civilians either individually, in groups, or en masse can and often times do amplify the strengths and capabilities of violent non-state actors and therefore, “friction with them cannot be avoided.”<sup>1096</sup> This is all the more true when the only available response to disturbances in urban environments is the deployment of military or heavily armed police forces skilled more in heavy-handed conventional operations than in conducting civilian-sensitive probing and discrete raids.

Urban operations are complicated even when towns are mostly empty and when fears of collateral deaths and damage are at a minimum. When urban environments are populated, operational conduct becomes infinitely more difficult to plan and coordinate: the environment is rife with confusion. Urban operations are particularly difficult for military organizations that are designed for open terrain warfare or conventional operations. ISR and communications all wither in urban environments and maneuver can be ground to a halt by crowds or traffic in an instant. Commanding and controlling troops and units in urban operations is not only confusing because of the terrain and the presence of civilians, it is confusing because urban operations, particularly against non-state actors, have been studiously avoided and neglected in doctrine and training. “Battle command is not the only doctrinal concept to suffer when viewed through the lens of urban operations. Processes, terms, and concepts designed to aid commanders in decisionmaking need to account for the mix of missions and tasks a commander is likely to find

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<sup>1096</sup> Amidror, Yaakov, “Winning the Counterinsurgency War: The Israeli Experience,” JCPA Strategic Perspectives, 23 June 2008, p. 38.

confronting him in a city...unfortunately the commander's 'tool box' has too many implements designed for decades now past, eras in which urban operations were the exception rather than the norm they are rapidly becoming.”<sup>1097</sup>

In light of strategies that require providing stabilization and order in disorderly places and in light of greater urbanization and the collocation of civilians and hostile actors, the U.S. Army will have to maintain a robust capacity for conducting the types of operations that occurred in Iraq on a daily basis. Full spectrum tactical capacities will be at a premium and organizational adaptation is a must. Unless violent and other criminal non-state actors decide to separate themselves from their supporting population, urban operations—despite the U.S. Army's disinclination for conducting them—will be a staple of stabilization and full spectrum operations for the foreseeable future.

#### **8.4.3 The Actors: Why Weak States Will Matter Even More**

There are a number of states that suffer from persistent low level (and occasionally high level) conflict. In each case, governments have lost their monopoly over the legitimate use of violence and the market for security has been effectively deregulated: multiple actors and organizations fill the vacuum to provide services or to exploit environmental vulnerabilities left in the state's absence. This process is essentially zero-sum and cumulative. Conflict leads to state erosion and vice versa until one organization or a coalition of organizations establish some form of new equilibrium. What is troubling is that this equilibrium does not necessarily favor the resumption

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<sup>1097</sup> Glenn, Russell W. and Gina Kingston, *Urban Battle Command in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2005, p. 16.

of state control and the provision of state services. Instead, organizational Darwinism takes over and those most capable of exploiting the environment and imposing their will, however corrupt, end up commanding or at least sharing in the marketplace of violent dispensations and the distribution of justice.

Persistent conflict, like that which occurred in Iraq or is occurring in Somalia and elsewhere, opens the door to all shapes and forms of disorder. Disorder in turn attracts or releases organizations that thrive off of and sow even more disorder through criminal and violent enterprising. “States are most vulnerable to collapse in the time immediately before, during, and after conflict. When chaos prevails, terrorism, narcotics trade, weapons proliferation, and other forms of organized crime can flourish.”<sup>1098</sup> Many weak states are particularly vulnerable to dismemberment by preexisting informal organizations and networks erupting when formal state structures are removed. If and when these organizations’ operations begin to sap legitimacy from the government, they become de facto insurgencies. But unlike most 20<sup>th</sup> Century insurgencies, these modern insurgencies do not necessarily have to start out as a coordinated or designed effort to replace or subsume the government; in fact, they might have no interest in this role at all.<sup>1099</sup> Because of preexisting structural characteristics and intrinsic networks and because the state is already losing control of its borders and territory within its borders, modern insurgencies might merely evolve as an organizational response to changes in the environment

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<sup>1098</sup> Krasner, Stephen D. and Carlos Pascual, “Addressing State Failure,” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 84, Number 4, p. 153.

<sup>1099</sup> But, in some cases, these organizations go so far as to form parallel governments operating alongside accepted governments. See, Devenny, Patrick, “All Available Tools: Parallel Governance and Modern Insurgencies,” [smallwarsjournal.com](http://smallwarsjournal.com), Small Wars Foundation, 2009, p. 6.

and the evaporation of state service provision or ability to provide law and order. “The modern insurgency represents an evolved form of warfare that takes advantage of the capabilities that certain tribal societies demonstrate, the pre-existing and affiliated social, economic, and military networks that are easily adaptable to combat, and often extending across traditional boundaries and borders. This is the reality of today’s global environment, and it will remain so far into the future.”<sup>1100</sup> As these insurgencies expand, they not only continue to erode state controls further, they also provoke regional instability. Localized insurgencies spread for no less than 2 reasons: 1) insurgent organizations often have membership across borders and; 2) borders become increasingly difficult to police and enforce as the state withers and the insurgency expands.<sup>1101</sup>

Weakened states are also the target of organizations with transnational linkages and reach. Because of relaxed state and social controls, these organizations can operate relatively unmolested by host-nation forces and police in weakened or failing states.<sup>1102</sup> The leadership of al Qaeda, for instance, has made a habit of moving from sanctuary to sanctuary mostly in weakened states. Like other but far less capable groups, al Qaeda exists principally as a terrorist organization but also functions as a mobile insurgency capable of fomenting anti-state violence

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<sup>1100</sup> Reed, Brian, “A Social network Approach to Understanding an Insurgency,” *Parameters*, Summer 2007, p. 29.

<sup>1101</sup> Lynn, John A. “Patterns of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review*, July-August 2005, p. 22.

<sup>1102</sup> “For example, al Qaeda in Iraq and drug lords in Afghanistan are fighting against the government that represents order.” Terriff, Terry, et al, “Can We Adapt to Fourth Generation Warfare,” *Global Insurgency and the Future of Armed Conflict: Debating Fourth-Generation Warfare*, Eds. Terry Terriff, Aaron Karp, and Regina Karp, Routledge Global Security Studies, NY, 2008, p. 281.

and resistance wherever it goes.<sup>1103</sup> Because of its diverse membership, funding, and operational capabilities, al Qaeda can manifest in one form or another or can support affiliates in a number of weakened states simultaneously. Support for transnational organizations, like al Qaeda, operating in weak states can come from “diaspora communities, foreign mercenaries, organized criminal organizations, and regional, rather than super, powers.”<sup>1104</sup> When support is limited or is not substantial enough for ongoing or expanding operations, these organizations can engage in self- and situationally-reinforcing criminal activities. “They develop because a government cannot control its territory. Their growth then contributes to the instability in the region and results in the government ceding more territory. In some cases, a single group takes over that territory...the basic failure of the state to provide security combined with the easy availability of arms creates a downward spiral that results in ever increasing instability.”<sup>1105</sup> Weakened states also invite the comingling of variously motivated groups and, paradoxically, foment increasingly criminal behavior by these groups. “The absence of the rule of law in places such as Somalia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan provides ideal conditions for the blending of criminal and terrorist activities...terrorist groups who otherwise might rely on charitable contributions or even ‘legitimate’ businesses have little or no access to either in a failed state, leaving trafficking and

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<sup>1103</sup> For discussion see, Nagl, John A., *Asymmetric Threats to U.S. National Security to the Year 2010*, U.S. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2001, p. 44.

<sup>1104</sup> Benedict, Kennette, *Op Cit*, p. 119.

<sup>1105</sup> Hammes, Thomas X., “Transnational and Non-State Actors and the New Landscape of War,” Paper Prepared for the Seminar on Transnational and Non-State Armed Groups, HPCR, Cambridge, 9-10 March 2007, pp. 6-7.

other forms of crime as the obvious and easier alternatives. An organic criminal capability becomes paramount and the sole method by which to sustain the organization.”<sup>1106</sup>

Organized crime, terrorist, and insurgent groups are not the only types of organizations that thrive in weakened states. Militias and warlord-led organizations also evolve and prosper where state controls are absent or weak. The existence and actions of these groups further weakens the legitimacy of the state and its ability to be the sole arbiter of violence or even social services. “Militias represent armed groups, irregular yet recognizable as an armed force, operating within ungoverned areas or in weak failing states. They range from ad hoc organizations with shared identities to more permanent groups possessing the ability to provide goods, services, and security along with their military capabilities. Militias challenge the sovereignty of the state by breaking the monopoly on violence traditionally the preserve of states.”<sup>1107</sup> Warlords operate in a fashion similar to militias: “Given the collapse of state control, warlords represent an attempt to re-establish stability within anarchy. All warlords, to an extent, are rebuilding patronage networks and means to enforce contracts—quasi-government operating a monopoly of violence within established, although flexible areas.”<sup>1108</sup> Both militias and warlord-led organizations, while providing alternative governance and stability, weaken the formal state and tend to do so over very long periods.

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<sup>1106</sup> Sanderson, Thomas M., “Transnational Terror and Organized Crime: Blurring the Lines,” SAIS Review, Volume XXIV, Number 1, Winter-Spring 2004, p. 51.

<sup>1107</sup> U.S. Joint Forces Command, Op Cit, p. 36.

<sup>1108</sup> Jackson, Paul, “Warlords as Alternative Forms of Governance,” Small Wars & Insurgencies, 1 June 2003, p. 147.



Perhaps more nefarious than warlords and militias and equally as capable of transcending borders as terrorist and internationally capable insurgent groups are gangs. Many modern gangs can be characterized as an amalgamation of warlords, militias, and in most cases, organized criminal groups: they share or emulate the capabilities, structures, and motivations of each of these actors. Transnational gangs form, burgeon, and emigrate from weakened and destabilized urban areas in developing *and* developed countries. “Gangs emerge, prosper, and solidify their position as a viable social organizational form in housing projects, neighborhoods, prisons, slums, cities, urban regions, and even entire countries that have undergone (or are undergoing) varying forms of societal failure.”<sup>1109</sup> Gangs, that are transnational in character (and many are increasingly so disposed), like their other non-state contemporaries can sow significant disorder wherever they choose to operate. Gangs exist in practically every society but have expanded their capacities in weakened states and cities. The threat they pose is not unlike that of the insurgent organizations that evolved in Iraq. “In Central and South America, gangs are now nothing less than out of control. Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala are all being directly threatened by the Maras. In addition, Brazilian society was recently brought to its knees by a powerful prison gang that instigated a limited duration state wide insurgency that resulted in numerous killings and decapitations—much like the ritual Jihadi beheadings witnessed in Iraq.”<sup>1110</sup>

Although all of these non-state organizational types have existed in one form or another for centuries, their presence, growth, and continued influence is expanding in correlation with the

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<sup>1109</sup> Bunker, Robert J. and John P. Sullivan, “Iraq and the Americas: 3 GEN Gangs Lessons and Prospects,” Small Wars Journal, Volume 8, May 2007, p. 3.

<sup>1110</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

weakening of states. As states cede more and more formal control over their territory, by choice or circumstance, and as globalization continues to spread the tools requisite for enhanced organizational efficiency and effectiveness, non-state organizations and collections of people will fill the void. And as these organizations gain strength, expand their resources, and spread disorder and/or alternative forms of governance, they will progressively threaten the nation-state arrangement that has for the most part of the last century effectively suppressed or disrupted their operations. These organizations or their ideological or motivational progeny then will increasingly threaten U.S. interests and thus must be taken into due account in strategy.

#### **8.4.4 Weak States, Cities, and Actors: Effects on Military Strategy, Rebalancing, and the Spectrum of Conflict**

For the foreseeable future, threatening state and non-state organizations will adopt methods that help them achieve their strategic objectives. Threat organizations will also adopt almost any methods that help them deny the strategic objectives of their competitors. Some convergence of the threat types can be expected, particularly as each continues to draw lessons from all the others. The U.S. Army will have to be able to influence and counter all types of threat organizations within the full spectrum of conflict, and might have to do simultaneously. Thus, it will have to plan for, train, and maintain full spectrum capabilities. In the absence of a full spectrum capability, or if and when the U.S. Army rebalances back towards being combat-centric, the U.S. Army will have to be prepared to spend significant time and resources, depending on the mission, adapting to the environment and potential adversaries. The less amenable adversaries are to the capabilities the Army brings to bear, the more time and

adaptation will be required to appropriately counter these adversaries and achieve organizational objectives.

Strategy will have to acknowledge that the path to achieving national security and protecting national interests is not so clear cut. Unless the United States is willing to give up a sizable amount of influence and capacity in areas where the unconventional is the conventional and against adversaries that are amorphous and adaptive, its forces will have to maintain full spectrum capacities. “Leaders should abandon any vestiges of fixed, linear, monotonic single-dimensioned security policy pursued under the false assumption that such behavior would not cause significant problems in other defense-related matters; and the public, in assessing such policies, needs to anticipate and accept conflicts in goals and methods and not demand black-and-white security strategies and outcomes.”<sup>1111</sup> Given the likely future threat environment and rather permanent U.S. interests, adopting simple and immutable strategies with ‘victory’ as an outcome is unacceptable. Strategies that achieve stability through a variety of measures against a variety of enemies make much more sense. Black-and-white strategies assume black-and-white enemies and require or at least permit black-and-white force structures, training, and capabilities or something less than full spectrum. When and where national interests intersect with enemies that are not so monochromatic, the U.S. Army will have to adapt, perhaps significantly so, unless of course the conflict environment is nearly perfectly suited to hosting the U.S. Army and the enemy is thoroughly amenable to the capabilities this force fields. Given the ambiguous and adaptive nature and the range of potential and possible threat organizations, this is increasingly unlikely. “To mitigate risk to the future requirements to national security, it is imperative that

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<sup>1111</sup> Mandel, Robert, *The Changing Face of National Security: A Conceptual Analysis*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1994, p. 138.

the military take a step back and look at all of the factors at work within the world that are shaping the future threat to American security and interests.”<sup>1112</sup>

Strategy is defined as: “A prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives.”<sup>1113</sup> Enemies would be prudent to inject lessons from the insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq into their strategies. Although the strategies and tactics adversaries employed in Afghanistan and Iraq are not positive, states and non-state actors do not necessarily have to defeat the United States to achieve their strategic aims; merely disrupting its forces might suffice. In a sense, states and non-state actors can employ a Clausewitzian negative strategy or take actions to get the United States to renounce its aims without generating any positive benefits for themselves. Prudence would dictate that the United States maintain an Army capable of confronting any likely strategic adversary so as to obviate weaknesses and deter enemies from trying to exploit these weaknesses.<sup>1114</sup> Prudence would also dictate that the U.S. Army, despite notable accomplishments in Iraq, not assume that it has built a successful and durable template for conducting simultaneous full spectrum operations. Although it is in the nature of organizations to continue to do what they perceive as effective—as witnessed in calls for a ‘surge’ in Afghanistan—this is a recipe for failure in the current international security

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<sup>1112</sup> Armstrong, Charles S., *Beyond Westphalia: The Emergent Globalization Paradigm*, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 25 May 2006, p. 48.

<sup>1113</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Op Cit*.

<sup>1114</sup> This may not be possible in all cases. The mere deployment of any type of force, however necessary strategically, will fuel threat perceptions. See Trevorton, Gregory F., et al, *Exploring Religious Conflict*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2005.

environment. Enemy doctrine is not fixed and U.S. Army doctrine should not be either. What was painfully learned in Iraq was not that there is winning one-size-fits-all strategy for conducting simultaneous full spectrum operations but instead that in the absence of a full spectrum capacity the U.S. Army will have to be prepared to conduct wrenching organizational adaptation to accomplish its goals.<sup>1115</sup>

Recent and successive U.S. Defense Strategies have emphasized the importance of poorly performing countries and ungoverned territories to U.S. national security and global stability.<sup>1116</sup> “Poorly performing developing countries are linked to humanitarian catastrophes; mass migration; environmental degradation; regional instability; energy insecurity; global pandemics; international crime; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); and, of course, transnational terrorism.”<sup>1117</sup> Strategies emphasizing stability, whether global, hemispheric, or even regional, require the U.S. Army to be able to conduct simultaneous full spectrum operations in ungoverned and alternatively governed territories. Alternatively governed territories, like many parts of Iraq following the collapse of the central government, tend to be unstable and require significant resources to be ‘re-governed.’<sup>1118</sup> Providing stability to alternatively and

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<sup>1115</sup> The spirit of this is embodied in Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Op Cit. “FM 3-24 is not general enough to be applicable for every future insurgency.” Alderson, Alexander, “US COIN Doctrine and Practice: An Ally’s Perspective,” *Parameters*, Winter 2007-08, p. 43.

<sup>1116</sup> For an expanded explanation of this relationship see, Bush, George, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44, The White House, 7 December 2005, p. 1-2.

<sup>1117</sup> Patrick, Stewart, “Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Volume 29, Number 2, 2006, p. 27.

<sup>1118</sup> RAND defines ungoverned territories as “areas in which a state faces significant challenges in establishing control. They can be failed or failing states, poorly controlled land or maritime borders, or areas within

ungoverned areas requires unique skill sets, ones that are neither inherent nor trained for in the conduct of offensive and defensive operations: the sequential provisioning of security, justice and reconciliation, social and economic well being, and governance and participation<sup>1119</sup> are all important to the stabilization and re-governance of alternatively and ungoverned territories. Reconstructing or creating state institutions is necessary to stabilize ungoverned areas, a fact recognized by the United States government and the international community<sup>1120</sup> if not entirely accepted by the U.S. Army. Despite its recognition of this fact, the international community does not have the wherewithal to accomplish this mission. The United States, largely through the U.S. Army, is perhaps the only country or entity capable of accomplishing this task.<sup>1121</sup> To make matters worse, because of the nature of some failing or weakened states, these operations

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otherwise viable states to which the central government's authority does not extend.” RAND, *Ungoverned Territories*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2007, p. 1. Drapeau argues that there is a contest between authority and rebellion over political space (“hearts, minds, and acquiescence of the general population”) rather than physical space. In political space, “nonkinetic techniques are at least as valuable as traditional kinetic techniques.” Drapeau, Mark D., et al, “So Many Zebras, So Little Time: Ecological Models and Counterinsurgency Operations,” *Defense Horizons* Number 62, February 2008, p. 2.

<sup>1119</sup> CSIS, “Post-Conflict Reconstruction,” Task Framework, Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the United States Army, May 2002, p. 3. This is later echoed in Joint Publication (JP) 3-24: “Successful counterinsurgents support or develop local institutions with legitimacy and the ability to provide basic services, economic opportunity, public order, and security.” Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, Revision First Draft, 2008, p. X-1.

<sup>1120</sup> Jones, Seth G., et al, *Establishing Law and Order After Conflict*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2005, p. 205.

<sup>1121</sup> “The international community is not, however, adequately organized to deal with governance failures.” Krasner, Stephen D. and Carlos Pascual, *Op Cit*, p. 153.

might have to be conducted in a bureaucratic and institutional vacuum: “In many parts of the world, there are no civil institutions; there are no strong, functioning institutional bureaucracies because a functioning bureaucracy does not take one but often takes several generations of literacy to function well. Also, in many parts of the world, it is unclear where the borders are.”<sup>1122</sup> This possibility is not covered in existing doctrine:<sup>1123</sup>

*“This idea of a vacuum though, nobody wants to wrestle with the fact that in some parts of the world there is just no structure at all. Everybody assumes that there is something to work with, some tribal structure or something...I don’t know of any doctrine anywhere that does not assume that there is something or someone that you can work with, some kind of authority structure that you can work with and try to build up.”*<sup>1124</sup>

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<sup>1122</sup> Kaplan, Robert D., Op Cit, p. 4. Compounding this problem is the fact that many jihadist insurgent organizations think and act globally. To them, “territorial and governmental control are relatively unimportant.” Therefore, current conflicts against insurgents are not for control of a government or a territory but for order against ideology. See, Gompert, David C., Op Cit, p. 20.

<sup>1123</sup> But this problem has been recognized for over a decade. “American counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine must be revised to reflect the post-Cold War strategic environment...the definition of insurgency itself must be expanded to reflect the complexity of the new security environment.” Metz, Steven, Counterinsurgency: Strategy and the Phoenix of American Capability, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 28 February 1995, p. 26.

<sup>1124</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad C., Personal Interview, 5 November 2008. Even where structure exists, it may be totally ineffective or even counterproductive. “In postconflict environments, local police are normally unprepared, unwilling, or unable to perform police functions. Even when local security personnel are re-equipped, retrained, and escorted by international police advisers, they still have difficulty adapting to new

Commonly used concepts and definitions assume that there is a recognizable and formal partner government in place to assist or be supported by counterinsurgent efforts:

*“Because of the definition of COIN that we were stuck with, there is an assumption that we are supporting a government. That is an assumption.”<sup>1125</sup>*

Rebalancing away from full spectrum capacities does not help secure strategic interests in these circumstances; in fact, this kind of rebalancing ensures that a number of strategic objectives cannot be met or can only be met at substantial cost. If stability is the goal, then maintaining full spectrum capabilities and a capacity for intervention is required. “From a cost-benefit analysis, too, it is much less expensive to prevent state failing and failure than it is to provide post-conflict humanitarian relief and/or funds for post-conflict reconstruction.”<sup>1126</sup> Although progress in failed or failing states “continues to be judged in large part on the basis of international resources expended or programs implemented,”<sup>1127</sup> capability is still measured by the capacity of an organization to support strategic objectives and to accomplish organizational goals. “Few major combat operations alone, no matter how decisive, can achieve the nation’s strategic

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circumstances, providing police services, and gaining public acceptance. In addition, police institutions need to be reformed and new police officers need to be recruited.” Perito, Robert M., Op Cit, p. 2.

<sup>1125</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Crane, Conrad C., Personal Interview, 5 November 2008.

<sup>1126</sup> Rotberg, Robert I., “Nation-State Failure: A Recurring Phenomenon?,” NIC 2020 Project Paper, 6 November 2003, p. 8.

<sup>1127</sup> Cohen, Craig, Measuring Progress in Stabilization and Reconstruction, U.S. Institute of Peace, Stabilization and Reconstruction Series No. 1, March 2006, p. 3.



objectives...because no other agency is capable of taking the lead in post-conflict, the U.S. military should accept its role as the lead agency, plan for it, and be ready to execute as the next phase of operations until relieved of responsibility by a civilian authority.”<sup>1128</sup>

## **8.5 FUTURE ADVERSARY STRATEGIES: THE CASE AGAINST THE LEGACY AND FOR THE INCORPORATION OF ADAPTATION**

The military planning, programming, and budgeting system, or PPBS, is a slow and laborious arrangement designed to match strategy with force structure over a period of years and sometimes up to a decade. Acquisition, despite notable rapid acquisition procedures (the RFI in particular) employed during OEF and OIF is also a significantly protracted process. This sclerotic system was serviceable during the drawn out competition of the Cold War but now poses significant constraints on potential organizational adaptation. In fact, the PPBS system or any similarly entertained derivative of this system, constrains organizational adaptation while at the same time requiring it to occur for the prosecution of strategy. As was demonstrated in Iraq, some adversaries adapt very quickly and can rapidly marshal significant personnel and material to accomplish their organizational goals seemingly out of thin air. Matching this capability with a system designed to respond in, say, 5 years or longer, invites jeopardy. Strategies and doctrine reflecting the protracted timelines of the PPBS also assure that no matter how forward looking

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<sup>1128</sup> Rooms, Travis E., *Beginning with the End in Mind: Post-Conflict Operations and Campaign Planning*, School of Advanced Military Studies U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 26 May 2005, p. 49.

and innovative the planner, military organizations will have to be prepared to adapt. Only if, or until, enemies decide to cooperate with U.S. planning and procurement procedures, future leaders will have their policy options tied to structural and force decisions made 10 years earlier. Thus, organizations will have to be prepared to adapt to achieve organizational goals.<sup>1129</sup> This puts organizational leaders in the awkward position of having to adapt to a recently manifesting enemy with a force structure and attendant equipment developed for a decade's old strategy. Developing flexible strategy is difficult: interests, and the structures securing these interests, do not change often even though threat organizations might. In an age where the international security environment is populated with both slowly developing and nearly instantaneously developing threat organizations, organizational adaptation is critical for supporting fairly stable strategies, defending national interests, and ultimately for survival.

Many aspects of the U.S. Army's institutional legacy, from top to bottom, inhibit organizational adaptation. Strategy premised on the primacy of state-based enemies and the control of territory is limited in its applicability to adversaries that don't respect national borders. "A strategy focused on controlling territory is not useful against a geographically dispersed and mobile adversary."<sup>1130</sup> Whether al Qaeda operates in Afghanistan or Pakistan is of limited concern to that organization but poses significant and perhaps insurmountable challenges to U.S. military strategy. Doctrine reflecting static preferences rather than a dynamic reality is also inhibiting. "Doctrine must evolve with the changing requirements of the operational environment to ensure an organization remains relevant and viable."<sup>1131</sup> Words and pictures,

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<sup>1129</sup> See, Reynolds, Kevin, Op Cit, p. 1.

<sup>1130</sup> Gompert, David C., Op Cit, p. 2.

<sup>1131</sup> Sigel, Michael B., Op Cit, p. 106.

codified in documents that are only occasionally updated and typically only when events have overcome the organization, can keep the adaptive process in stasis.<sup>1132</sup> It is difficult to capture the variability of the enemy in carefully scripted lexicon and in sentence format; the tendency to use Manichean terms or literal chiaroscuro creates false boundaries and an inappropriate sense of definition. Such misleadingly neat distinctions have cascading effects on efforts to separate the preferred, possible, and probable and ultimately affect training and environmental understanding.<sup>1133</sup> Training limited to one type of adversary but posed in various circumstances, however coherent with legacy training apparatuses, does not make an individual or an organization adaptive or full spectrum capable; instead, it dulls the innately adaptive spirit and cognitive curiosity of the soldier. Learning and adapting are continuous processes that shape both friendly and threat forces. “It is interesting to note that this pathologic resistance on the part of the military to ‘lessons learned’ on counterinsurgency (and counterterrorism for that matter) rarely affects the opponents in a given conflict (i.e., guerrilla groups or terrorist organizations), who consciously study and learn both from their own past mistakes as well as from the successful operations of their enemies. This is no less true among insurgents in Iraq than it has

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<sup>1132</sup> Terriff, et al, argue that “Cookie-cutter ‘how to’ doctrines that often have far too much in common with manuals for how to strip a rifle or fix an engine may work in one specific place but may not work nearly as well in another conflict—indeed, they are a potential recipe for failure. What is required are new ways of thinking about war and warfare, and concepts and doctrines that stress ‘understanding’ and ‘knowledge’ rather than specific practices and implementation if our military organizations are to be able to deal successfully with the evolution of war and the resultant challenges across geography and cultures.” Terriff, Terry, *Op Cit*, p. 282.

<sup>1133</sup> See, Gray, Colin S., “Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?,” Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, March 2006, p. 54.

been for guerrillas and terrorists elsewhere.”<sup>1134</sup> The Warrior Ethos needs to be supplemented with the Adaptive Ethos: a matching of brawn and brains to make the full spectrum soldier.<sup>1135</sup>

Adversary variability and willingness to regress into older forms of combat confounds the linear progression assumed by many military planners and strategists. This can occur over a long period as adversaries find utility in cruder and less expensive forms of warfare and equipment or over a short period (such as when in frequent contact)<sup>1136</sup> as adversaries discover that trying to keep pace with ultra-modern militaries, like that fielded by the United States, is not a winning proposition. Adversary regression is sometimes consciously chosen and at other times the product of environmental conditions favoring low-tech methods and skills. Adversary regression can either be the result of the security dilemma in reverse or one occurring in parallel. Posen describes the security dilemma as such, “Because neighbors wish to remain autonomous and secure, they will react by trying to strengthen their own positions. States can trigger these reactions even if they have no expansionist inclinations. This is the security dilemma: What one does to enhance one’s own security causes reactions that, in the end, can make one less

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<sup>1134</sup> Hoffman, Bruce, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2004, p. 7.

<sup>1135</sup> “To be effective at counter-insurgency and stabilization operations, an army needs its members to perceive themselves as something other than, or more than, just warriors. Unless they do, they are liable to apply a warrior ethos, approach and methods, for example exercising hard power (in particular, ‘kinetic solutions;’) when they should be exercising soft power...To be effective at both combat and counterinsurgency, the army needs to have sufficient warrior ethos, but not so much that it cannot adapt, otherwise warrior ethos becomes an obstacle to versatility and success. Combining these two cultures is highly problematic.” Kiszely, John, *Op Cit*, p. 10.

<sup>1136</sup> For evidence of this pattern, See Appendix B. Insurgents in Iraq actively took measures to operate below the threshold of technical sophistication of the U.S. Army whenever possible.

secure.”<sup>1137</sup> This relationship does not have to progress as a linear competition, though. States can trigger reverse reactions (an anti-modernization) in competitors or it can trigger parallel reactions (alternative modernization) where competitors don’t pursue dominance or parity but instead pursue capabilities that undermine dominance, particularly when these capabilities come at low cost, are easily produced, and are imitable.

History is replete with actors failing and succeeding to adapt according to a changing international security environment. Exploiting or failing to exploit elements and combinations of mass, firepower, and maneuver have enabled or disabled forces of all stripes across the historic range. Depending on the environment, one competitor’s strengths can be another’s weaknesses and vice versa. Adaptation thus serves dual purposes. The ability to adapt and to act across the full spectrum of conflict allows an organization to exploit all necessary means of accomplishing its strategic objectives and at all the traditional levels of warfare. Moreover, the ability to adapt and to act across the full spectrum denies competitors the opportunity to exploit weaknesses and vulnerabilities. As conflict and the actors participating in conflict change, competitors must adapt accordingly to remain relevant or survive. If the United States continues to pursue strategic monism, other states and non-state actors will adjust accordingly and rapidly. A strength is not a strength for long when competitors adapt. Maintaining a lead requires maintaining the ability to remain ahead in the adaptive cycle. Modernization and combat capabilities contribute only a small portion of that ability.

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<sup>1137</sup> Posen, Barry R., “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Ed. Michael E. Brown, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1993, p. 104.

### **8.5.1 The Conventional (The Good)—Unlikely and Requires Slight Adaptation<sup>1138</sup>**

It is assumed that highly conventional, state-based enemies will remain highly conventional and will defend their interests or will attempt to undermine U.S. interests by sequential and traditional means. Conventional enemies, however unlikely in the future, are convenient: countering them would only require slight and incremental adaptations to the traditional force.<sup>1139</sup> Technological strengths in precision and firepower could be exploited expeditiously. Standard examples include a mechanized infantry war in Korea, an air and sea battle in the Taiwan Straits, or a tank battle somewhere in the Middle East. It is further assumed that unconventional methods would not be employed, in the main, by any of the participants regardless of how effective these methods might be at undermining U.S. strategy and interests. But if the United States' adversaries are deterred at the upper end of the spectrum of conflict by high-end strategic air, naval, and missile forces but not at the lower end, obviously a competent enemy would deny U.S. strategic goals through strategies emphasizing lower-end of the spectrum capabilities. Doing so would be remarkably inconvenient to an institution that desires

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<sup>1138</sup> Three traditional threat scenarios are considered unlikely: global war against a near peer; an anti-U.S. alliance and; war in the open ocean or massed air-to-air engagements. Tangredi, Sam J., "All Possible Wars? Toward a Consensus View of the Future Security Environment, 2001-2021," McNair Paper #63, National Defense University, 2000, p. 136. See also, Nagl, John A. and Paul L. Yingling, "New Rules for New Enemies," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2006.

<sup>1139</sup> Williams contends that this preference has two parts: the Congressional-Military-Industrial Complex and mirror imaging, that "future adversaries would be like us—fight like us, equip like us." Williams, J. Noel, *Op Cit*, p. 9.

a return to combat-centric doctrine and capabilities. But wherever there is a weakness, it will be exploited by state-based and non-state enemies alike.

State-based enemies are not quite as static as this generic as the preferred threat paradigm would assume. State-based enemies and impartial observers alike have adapted their strategies, operations, and tactics based on the U.S. Army's performance in conflict. In response to Operation DESERT STORM, one high-level Indian observer wrote: "The Indian political leadership needs to review their political philosophy which precludes any pre-emptive action against an enemy concentrating its forces in preparation for war. More so, if the enemy has a preponderance of military power as the coalition fielded against Iraq. The defensive posture must be designed to inflict attrition at all stages of the conflict so that the accumulative effects exceed the point where the enemy can continue to prosecute his offensive. Military commanders must integrate the entire force spectrum and direct their energies to degrade the enemy's total potential by striking at critically vulnerable places and times. They must be permitted to apply their resources before, during and after the hostilities."<sup>1140</sup> In response to OIF the Russians "found much to applaud from a military point of view in what they perceived to be innovation, adaptation, and effective use of information and an integration among the services that is new. On the other hand, they were critical of Iraq's performance and believed that the Iraqis had the means to defeat US forces in the field. General of the Army M. L. Gareyev argued that the Iraqis did not effectively defend the approaches to Baghdad. He argued that 'with thorough camouflage, combined with a large number of decoy targets and minefields, they (troops defending the approaches to Baghdad) could have played an important role in repulsing the

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<sup>1140</sup> Nair, VK, War in the Gulf: Lessons for the Third World, Lancer International, New Delhi, 1991, p. 228.

invasion of the Anglo-American troops. Gareyev also argued that Russia could learn from the US experience in combating guerrilla warfare. For example, US operations in Iraq suggested to him that Russia should train and organize units to operate in ‘maneuver intensive raids’; and that greater attention must be paid to ‘reliable protection for lines of communication, command and control posts and logistics.’ For the most part, these Russian observers did not believe the coalition handled urban warfare well and felt that a well-executed urban fight would give the US pause.”<sup>1141</sup> It must be assumed that states witnessing operational struggles in Afghanistan and Iraq would exploit the full spectrum of conflict in any confrontation with the United States. This demands that the U.S. Army maintain the capacity to adapt accordingly:

*“I think that a fight against a near-term competitor sometime in the future would be a fight dominated by all of these elements [offense, defense, HIC, and LIC] and we need an adaptive soldier and leader on the battlefield that can quickly move from one to the other and knows when to apply on and the other.”*<sup>1142</sup>

As Nagl and Yingling argue, “Even states with the resources to generate conventional combat power find insurgent tactics effective.”<sup>1143</sup> Non-state actors surely must have learned the same lessons.

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<sup>1141</sup> Fontenot, Gregory, et al, Op Cit, p. 387.

<sup>1142</sup> General Chiarelli, Peter, Telephone Interview, 27 October 2008.

<sup>1143</sup> Nagl, John A. and Paul L. Yingling, “New Rules for New Enemies,” Armed Forces Journal, October 2006.



Conventional threat assessment and thinking proceeds under the following guidelines offered by Kiszely:<sup>1144</sup>

- The end state that matters is the military one;
- Operational success is achieved by the application of lethal firepower which, in turn, is largely a question of targeting and physical manoeuvre;
- The effects to be achieved are physical ones;
- The means to the end are largely attritional: destroying targets until there are none left;
- Technology will disperse or at least penetrate ‘the impenetrable fog of war’;
- Given sufficient resources, all campaigns are winnable—and quickly;
- The world is divided into ‘enemy forces’ and ‘friendly forces’ and;
- The operational picture can be seen in distinct colours: black and white.

The conceptualization of modern conventional adversaries is flawed for a number of reasons: 1) some peer traditional conventional adversaries are a shadow of their former selves and have no real interests in directly challenging U.S. military superiority for quite some time, if ever;<sup>1145</sup> 2) China’s military growth, although impressive and expanding, is not outpacing U.S. military growth in any significant traditional categories and won’t be for quite some time, if ever; 3) mitigating threats to strategic goals and interests does not necessarily require a large and highly conventional ground force—many of these threats can be deterred or punished with existing air

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<sup>1144</sup> Kiszely, John, Op Cit, p. 9.

<sup>1145</sup> See, Gates, Robert M., Op Cit, p. 32.

and sea forces and; 4) conventional enemies are no more likely to disturb global stability and threaten vital U.S. interests than non-state or unconventional adversaries. Although nuclear and major wars waged by states might be the most catastrophic threats the United States faces, they are still the least likely. As argued in a Joint Operational Environment (JOE) assessment conducted by Joint Forces Command, “Irregular wars are more likely, and winning such conflicts will prove just as important to the protection of America’s vital interests and the maintenance of global stability.”<sup>1146</sup> Additionally, capabilities premised on traditional threats cannot and will not prevent other kinds of conflict, which might be equally destabilizing if not as well resourced or managed. The most important kind of war then will be “the kind waged not by states against one another but by guerrillas, terrorists, and similar organizations against states, or the other way around.”<sup>1147</sup>

Conventional enemies will likely become more unconventional as they are capable, particularly because non-state organizations armed with irregular capabilities are proliferating and states have had trouble handling the threats these organizations pose.<sup>1148</sup> Accordingly, an unconventional capability is useful against both non-state and state-based actors. Iraq, and domestic, military, and government responses to the conduct of operations there, indicated to other potential adversaries that there is much to gain by emulating insurgent organizations in their operations:

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<sup>1146</sup> U.S. Joint Forces Command, *Op Cit*, p. 46.

<sup>1147</sup> Creveld, Martin van, *The Culture of War*, Ballantine Books, NY, 2008, p. 297.

<sup>1148</sup> “The armed forces of the most advanced countries, and certainly of the United States, all formidable against enemies assembled in conveniently targetable formations, are least effective in fighting insurgents.” Luttwak, Edward, “Dead End: Counterinsurgency Warfare as Military Malpractice,” *Harper’s*, April 2007.

*“I think that in many ways, Iraq has been very revealing. It has given us the basic components of the new kind of fight and I think that anybody that we were to get into a similar type of confrontation with in the future is going to surely learn from those lessons.”*<sup>1149</sup>

The conduct of RDO and the subsequent failure to accomplish strategic objectives in Iraq because of a lack of full spectrum capabilities demonstrated that conventional dominance will not necessarily produce stability or favorable conditions in a target country. In fact, “overwhelming success in RDO produces 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order effects detrimental to creating the conditions for a free and open society to emerge within a region—the chief objective of military intervention in the modern environment.”<sup>1150</sup>

To counter U.S. forces, unconventional capabilities and strategies that exploit the lower end of the spectrum of conflict—or anything causing mass instability—are much cheaper to pursue but no less strategically effective. For smaller states, this might mean that the maintenance of WMD capabilities and significant numbers of unconventional forces is sufficient. For larger states this might mean the development of strategies of denial or attrition requiring the

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<sup>1149</sup> General Chiarelli, Peter, Telephone Interview, 27 October 2008. See also, Bansahel, Nora, “Preventing Insurgencies after Major Combat Operations,” *Defence Studies*, Volume 6, Number 3, September 2006, p. 278, and, Arquilla, John, David Ronfeldt, and Michele Zanini, *Op Cit*, 1999. See also, Smith, Anton K., *Op Cit*, and Perry, Walter L. and John Gordon, *Analytic Support to Intelligence in Counterinsurgencies*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2008, p. 51.

<sup>1150</sup> Watson, Brian G., *Op Cit*, p. 4.

imposition of U.S. ground forces is sufficient. Both types of states might “couple low technology expedients with creative operational or tactical concepts” to achieve greater degrees of effectiveness.<sup>1151</sup> In either case, conventional enemies will likely perceive a need to maintain the “minimum military capacity essential to drive American political and military risk calculations toward prohibitive or unacceptable levels.”<sup>1152</sup> Paradoxically, the arguments for modernization and RDO that the NDP made in 1997, although intended otherwise, indicate quite precisely that traditional enemies will be much less likely to maintain a conventional course in the future: “we can safely assume that future adversaries will have learned from the Gulf War. It is likely that they will find new ways to challenge our interests, our forces and our citizens. They will seek to disable the underlying structures that enable our military operations.”<sup>1153</sup> Ironically, the United States might end up being the only country unable to learn from its operations in the Persian Gulf War, OEF, and OIF.

Conducting successive full spectrum operations throughout the 1990s and then simultaneous full spectrum operations in OIF should have been bellwether events indicating just how strategically dangerous the Transformation program could be if it was allowed to conceptually replace likely enemies with the convenient and preferred. Were Transformation not interrupted, at least temporarily, by operations in Iraq, there would be much less debate over the direction and posture of the U.S. Army. State-based, conventional enemies would still be the

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<sup>1151</sup> Isaacson, Jeffrey A. et al, Op Cit, p. 8.

<sup>1152</sup> Freier, Nathan, Strategic Competition and Resistance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Irregular, Catastrophic, Traditional, and Hybrid Challenges in Context, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, May 2007, p. 51.

<sup>1153</sup> National Defense Panel, Op Cit.

primary, and perhaps only, threats on the U.S. Army's radar. As Hoffman argues, "Had the United States achieved the transformation agenda it put forward, I think it would have been at a substantial strategic disadvantage in the real world today. No doubt, its capacity to defend against ballistic missiles and to attack the space-based assets of a mythical peer competitor would be superb."<sup>1154</sup> Adversaries are adaptive. Despite the U.S. Army's interest in putting adversaries into neat boxes and its assumption that the onward lockstep march towards technological capabilities will translate into full spectrum capacity against all types of threat organizations, the enemy has a vote in this process. As Gray warns, "If the American way of war becomes formulaic, albeit technologically impressive, it invites smart enemies to wage the kind of conflict wherein U.S. strengths would be at a heavy discount. Any belief that U.S. military power, somewhat transformed by the exploitation of information systems, can plan to fight almost without regard to enemy preferences and abilities, should be hastily buried."<sup>1155</sup> Conventional enemies do not have to fight conventionally in order to be effective, "they only have to create conditions similar to those we see today in Iraq on a wider regional level."<sup>1156</sup> It is likely the conventional will not be quite as conventional as it was once assumed: strategy and planning should take due account of this possibility.

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<sup>1154</sup> Hoffman, Frank G., 4GW as a Model of Future Conflict, Boyd 2007 Conference, 13 July 2007.

<sup>1155</sup> Gray, Colin S., *National Security Dilemmas: Challenges & Opportunities*, Potomac Books, Washington DC, 2009, pp. 42-43.

<sup>1156</sup> MacGregor, Douglas, *Army Transformation: Implications for the Future*, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, 15 July 2004, p. 10.

### 8.5.2 The Unconventional (The Bad)—Likely and Requires Significant Adaptation

Two future unconventional missions that the United States will likely have to conduct are the ‘Active Management of Purposeful Unconventional Threats’ and ‘Armed Stabilization’: Unconventional Threats—“The challenges of both terrorism and organized crime are increasing in strategic impact and lethality. Their lethal and nonlethal management requires persistent commitment of land forces with specialized capabilities. These forces must penetrate foreign territory and populations and operate with discrimination, precision, and low visibility;”<sup>1157</sup> Armed Stabilization—“Armed stabilization is undertaken in concert with other states in coalition. But is also remains a unilateral U.S. option. It includes substantial combat action, simultaneous provision of basic public goods to affected populations, and the initiation of early reconstruction.”<sup>1158</sup> A third mission, “Facilitation of Limited, Whole-of-Government Stabilization and Reconstruction,” is also likely. In this mission, land forces will “need to demonstrate increased competency in a number of essential nonmilitary functions associated with complex unconventional contingencies. For example, the more violent the environment, the likelier it is that U.S. land forces will fill essential nonmilitary capacity gaps until conditions are more conducive or hospitable to large-scale civilian deployment.”<sup>1159</sup> Conducting any of these missions with traditional configurations and training or with proposed ‘rebalanced’ capabilities

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<sup>1157</sup> Freier, Nathan, *The New Balance: Limited Armed Stabilization and the Future of U.S. Landpower*, Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute and Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, April 2009, p. 72.

<sup>1158</sup> *Ibid*, p. 74.

<sup>1159</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

will be difficult. The challenge of unconventional operations, whether against traditional or unconventional threat organizations or in the conduct of stability operations, is compounded by the U.S. Army's "grounding in conventional war and cultural predisposition to focus almost exclusively on these types of campaigns."<sup>1160</sup> These three mission sets are likely but are not well covered by combat-centric modernization programs other than in rhetoric. Even if the future force is well disposed for the kinds of missions that Freier discusses (and this would be because of organizational and individual memory and skills developed during OEF and OIF, not force design), it will still have to adapt to a rapidly changing environment and therefore must be capable of conducting simultaneous full spectrum operations. Conducting these missions will require the U.S. Army to adapt nearly as much if not more so than it had to in Iraq.

Planning, training for, and conducting unconventional operations requires significant adaptive capacities of the organizations charged with translating tactical success into strategic victory. This is all the more true when the DOD institutionally avoids or applies conventional approaches to these operations. Throughout OIF and OEF the elements of the institutional U.S. Army and other DOD subordinates and affiliates, instead of thinking and acting unconventionally, applied conventional methods and means to unconventional missions and problem sets. The DOD has described the challenges posed in counterterrorism missions as "being able to *find, identify, track, and eliminate* terrorists."<sup>1161</sup> This is a highly conventional approach to this mission. Finding, identifying, tracking, and eliminating terrorists is an endless task and the resources devoted to this mission could be put to better use as part of a more

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<sup>1160</sup> Ucko, David, "Innovation or Intertia: The U.S. Military and the Learning of Counterinsurgency, *Orbis*, Spring 2008, p. 308.

<sup>1161</sup> Gompert, David C., *Op Cit*, p. 38.

unconventional strategy: “the drone campaign is in fact part of a larger strategic error—our insistence on personalizing this conflict with Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Devoting time and resources toward killing or capturing ‘high-value’ targets—not to mention the bounties placed on their heads—distracts us from larger problems, while turning figures like Baitullah Mehsud, leader of the Pakistani Taliban umbrella group, into Robin Hoods. Our experience in Iraq suggests that the capture or killing of high-value targets—Saddam Hussein or Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—has only a slight and fleeting effect on levels of violence.”<sup>1162</sup> When the DOD frames all conflict in a conventional sense, the Joint Staff concurs, and many units are then dedicated to the prosecution of a conventional war against a highly unconventional foe, organizational subunits find their goals that much more difficult to achieve.

Ucko contends that “the learning of counterinsurgency is understood as an Iraq exit-strategy”<sup>1163</sup> and that unconventional adversaries should not distract from the more important mission of preparing for more dangerous state-based enemies. The idea that adversaries will be unconventional and that OIF portends a likely future is only partially accepted by the U.S. Army—perhaps more so by the U.S. Marine Corps—but is almost wholly rejected by the other services. “The interpretation of this campaign [Iraq] as signifying a need to learn counterinsurgency clashes with that of other DoD components, which view it as a temporary aberration that will not be repeated. All too often, Iraq is cast as an exception to the rule: the specific political circumstances leading to the invasion were so peculiar, the United States’

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<sup>1162</sup> Kilcullen, David and Andrew McDonald Exum, “Death From Above, Outrage Down Below,” *The New York Times*, 16 May 2009.

<sup>1163</sup> Ucko, David, “Innovation of Inertia: The U.S. Military and the Learning of Counterinsurgency,” *Orbis*, Spring 2008, p. 302.



international isolation so inauspicious, and the initial occupation so bungled, that it is thought unlikely that a similar scenario will ever occur.”<sup>1164</sup> Given noticeable changes to the international security environment, this interpretation of OIF is mistaken.

### **8.5.3 The Unpredictable (The Ugly)—Likely and Requires Continuous Adaptation**

To counter unpredictable adversaries, which might be best characterized as a complex mix of diverse adversary types that are variously motivated will require continuous adaptation by the U.S. Army. The greatest threat facing the United States is not that posed by formal states,<sup>1165</sup> instead it is by some, yet unknown, amalgamation of various non-state organizations or state-supported organizations operating independently across the spectrum of conflict and potentially in league with other differently motivated organizations (i.e., insurgents cooperating with organized criminals and state forces simultaneously). This is true in part because the lethality and capability of organized groups is increasing, while the incentives for states to exploit nontraditional modes of warfare are on the rise. The preponderance of U.S. conventional power is another reason that threat organizations will adopt many forms and methods. “The United States, by virtue of its massive nuclear and conventional capability, has driven almost all potential opponents to embrace terrorism and insurgency as their only potentially viable theory

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<sup>1164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1165</sup> Ressler, Steve, “Social Network Analysis as an Approach to Combat Terrorism: Past, Present, and Future Research,” Homeland Security Affairs, Volume II, Number 2, July 2006.

of victory.”<sup>1166</sup> These contentions have been at least somewhat validated by experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq. Because of continued U.S. predominance in conventional warfare (and unconventional weaknesses) successes in both places are likely to be replicated by variously composed organizations.<sup>1167</sup>

The lines between conventional and unconventional conflict have blurred significantly: concepts such as front and rear no longer apply and boundaries are of little significance.<sup>1168</sup> This proved true OIF and OEF where the range of operations conducted by both sides on a continuous basis had “little resemblance to familiar doctrinal concepts.”<sup>1169</sup> Trying to separate the two is conceptually very difficult to accomplish unless it is done in doctrinal terms. But doctrinal terms accurately describing the range of unpredictable adversaries either do not apply or have not been invented yet. Distinguishing between conventional and irregular, combatants and noncombatants, and physical/kinetic and virtual accurately is thus nearly impossible. Threat organizations can assume almost any form and the methods available to them for achieving organizational goals are infinite.<sup>1170</sup> Even organizational goals are difficult to qualify since

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<sup>1166</sup> Long, Austin, “On ‘Other War’: Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research,” RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2006, p. 73.

<sup>1167</sup> Steinberg, Guido, Op Cit, p. 19.

<sup>1168</sup> Blank, Stephen J., Rethinking Asymmetric Treats, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, September 2003. See also, RAND, Building Partner Capacity is the Key to a Successful Counterinsurgency Strategy, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2006.

<sup>1169</sup> Emery, Norman E., “Irregular Warfare Information Operations: Understanding the Role of People, Capabilities, and Effects,” Military Review, November-December 2008, p. 27.

<sup>1170</sup> Hoffman, Frank G., Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Arlington, VA, December 2007, p. 57. See also, Mandel, Robert, Security, Strategy, and the Quest for

many organizations are reactively motivated and/or have no identifiable positive, constructive, or definable objectives. Unpredictable adversaries might: compete for uncontrolled spaces; engage in crime, weapons trafficking, and money laundering for profit; are mostly casualty insensitive; operate with or without the support of states and; might conduct isolated terrorist operations.<sup>1171</sup> “Today, the United States finds itself confounded by lightly-armed and loosely organized opponents that use violence illegitimately; information and the media indiscriminately; and in practice, appear more violent communities of interest than suitable military rivals. In spite of their obvious weaknesses, however, these nonstate opponents and malcontents have proven remarkably equal to the task of effective competition with the United States and its range of advantages in military power, resources, and prestige.”<sup>1172</sup> Developing templates or plans for countering these unpredictable threat organizations is no less difficult, cognitively or physically, than is predicting and controlling crime that is going to happen in the future. These actors and

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Bloodless War, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO, 2004 and Sallot, Steven M., Defeating a Cause: Anatomy of Defeat for Conflicts Involving Non-Nation States, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2006.

<sup>1171</sup> Metz, Steven, Rethinking Insurgency, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S Army War College, Carlisle, PA, June 2007, p. 11. See also, RAND, Countering Insurgency in the Muslim World: Rethinking U.S. Priorities and Capabilities, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, Larabee, F. Stephen, The Middle East: The Changing Strategic Environment, RAND, Santa Monica, 2006, and Hoffman, Frank G., Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Arlington, VA, December 2007.

<sup>1172</sup> Freier, Nathan, Strategic Competition and Resistance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Irregular, Catastrophic, Traditional, and Hybrid Challenges in Context,” Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, May 2007, pp. 53-54.

organizations operate almost exclusively at times and places of their own choosing, can be durable or ephemeral, and can blend into almost any environment.

As states further devolve and non-state organizations expand in size, scope, and influence, predicting their actions and planning operations against these organizations will prove to be nearly an impossible task. No matter the organizational form the U.S. Army assumes, adaptation will be required. Once engaged these organizations will mutate, expand or contract as organizational inputs and outputs are modified, and will attract or repel support from all sorts of variously motivated groups. “All over the world, citizens of states are transferring their primary allegiance away from the state to other things: to tribes, ethnic groups, religions, gangs, ideologies and so on. Many people who will no longer fight for their state will fight for their new primary loyalty. In America’s two wars with Iraq, the Iraqi state armed forces showed little fight, but Iraqi insurgents whose loyalties are to non-state elements are now waging a hard-fought and effective guerrilla war.”<sup>1173</sup> The U.S. Army will have no choice but to rapidly react and adapt to these unpredictable organizations should strategy necessitate that they be countered by military force.

#### **8.5.4 Achieving a Sustainable Balance through Adaptation**

There are several likely future threats to U.S. security and each will employ a range of strategies, operations, and tactics, as capable. Although some of these threat organizations are potential while others are probable and some are definite, each will challenge the U.S. Army, as

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<sup>1173</sup> Wheeler, Winslow T. and Lawrence J. Korb, *Military Reform*, Praeger Security International, Westport, CT, 2007, p. 196.

the United States' premier land-based force, to be full spectrum capable. The range of threat organization types, available methods, and motivations, is expansive: adversaries can be single individuals; massive networks of smaller organizations; states or; a dizzying and unpredictable combination of all of these. Operational purity and organizational homogeneity are unlikely traits for future threat organizations. Consequentially, singularly capable forces should be anathema to U.S. Army planners. But as the Transformation program continues into a period of rebalancing, "U.S. military force posture appears increasingly at odds with the emerging strategic environment."<sup>1174</sup>

The U.S. Army's rebalancing effort, which should otherwise be known as a return to Transformation, is quixotic. Many commentators, analysts, practitioners, and strategists doubt that the U.S. Army will have to fight a conventional war against a near-peer enemy anytime in the future but that is the premise on which the rebalancing drive is founded. Moreover, if such a conflict were to occur, it would be unlikely to involve a massive deployment of land-based forces for purely conventional operations. Thus, whatever traditional conventional capability deterioration has occurred over the past 8 years might not be so consequential. "Ultimately, the erosion of U.S. high-intensity warfare capabilities may not matter, since the United States is unlikely to face a serious competitor at the high end of land conflict in the near term."<sup>1175</sup> Even if a serious competitor did appear, it would do so slowly and perceptibly and would allow plenty of time for preparation, provisioning, and training. Furthermore, the doctrine, basic skills, training regimens, and equipment requisite to such an eventuality are all still largely in place

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<sup>1174</sup> Record, Jeffrey, *Beating Goliath*, Potomac Books, Washington DC, 2007, p. 109.

<sup>1175</sup> Long, Austin, *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006*, RAND Counterinsurgency Study Paper 6, 2008, p. 28.

despite resource shifting throughout OEF and OIF. Given that this is a very unlikely scenario, especially in the near term, the focus of rebalancing should be on capturing and institutionalizing the adaptive skills (charted in this study) that individuals and organizations developed throughout the course of OIF: adaptive decentralization, learning, experimentation, innovation, and information sharing against a set of truly full spectrum adversaries. The U.S. Army should specifically avoid assuming that the OIF experience provides a template for successful operations in the contemporary environment. The environment is too dynamic and adversaries are too adaptive for doctrine and training to assume past successes can be replicated with past actions.<sup>1176</sup> Strategy, potential enemies, and organizational goals should shape any rebalancing effort, not vice versa.

If the chosen organizational form, doctrine, training, and education are not appropriate for effectively and efficiently achieving organizational goals and objectives, in light of strategic interests, changes in the international security environment, and likely enemies, then they should all be rejected. Although any organization created by the U.S. Army will have to adapt when it comes into contact with the threat environment, its focus should be on adapting its organizational inputs and outputs in coherence with strategic imperatives and superior resources, not to

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<sup>1176</sup> “The Army should not adopt the Iraqi model as the basis for determining the operating environment. Instead, the OIF experience can inform the design of threats and scenarios. Replicating the operational environment must be so dynamic that operating in conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity becomes second nature to soldiers and their units. What can be imported from the Iraqi model is the range of threats (Special Republican Guard, regular army, *Fedayeen*, terrorists, etc.); the combination of enemy conventional, unconventional, and information operations; and the variety of conditions. These conditions range from terrain and weather combinations, simultaneous combat and humanitarian assistance, and changing political/social factors.” Fontenot, Gregory, et al, Op Cit, p. 385.

institutional flaws. Any organization formed should be done so in order to maximize its adaptive potential by responsively flooding resources to the smallest sub-units appropriate for any given mission. Inappropriate force design slows the adaptive process significantly as organizations have to adapt to an ever changing enemy while also adapting to institutional defects predicated on a misreading of the environment and strategic needs. Adapting to both is inefficient and ineffective: resources are wasted while the enemy is allowed to freely exploit any advantages obtained by its organizational form, resources, and inherent capabilities. Until organizational inputs and outputs are aligned to achieve organizational goals without significant structural interference from the institution, adaptation will suffer and the achievement of organizational goals will be subject to substantial setbacks and losses.

Redeveloping combat skills and capabilities that have been allowed to atrophy during recent campaigns is appropriate but it should not come at the expense of the ability to adapt or to the detriment of newly developed simultaneous full spectrum capabilities.<sup>1177</sup> Combat skills should be trained and incorporated as they enhance full spectrum capabilities and enable support for strategic initiatives. Essentially, organizational surprise should be eliminate; there should be few non-doctrinal missions for the future U.S. Army. Fundamental changes—needed but not achieved in the post-Cold War period—accomplished during the OIF campaign must be permanently incorporated into doctrine, training, and education.<sup>1178</sup> Rebalancing should also

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<sup>1177</sup> U.S. predominance in traditional warfare is not unchallenged, but is sustainable for the medium term given current trends.” Gates, Robert M., *The National Defense Strategy*, U.S. Department of Defense, 2008, pp. 20-21.

<sup>1178</sup> After Somalia, the U.S. Army failed to grasp the lessons of that conflict (dynamic nature of tribal society, in particular). Furthermore, despite the need, the U.S. Army inadvertently avoided organizational learning

duly reflect that while many, many organizational adaptations were made, the institutional Army resourced these adaptations, and strategy was altered to reflect the effectiveness of these adaptations, some things did not change. Although unit training strongly reflected ongoing operational needs as OIF progressed, by 2008, education at the U.S. Army War College overwhelmingly reflected an institutional preference for education on traditional operations and concepts—6.2% of the courses and 4.8% of the hours in the core curriculum were dedicated to ongoing operations.<sup>1179</sup> Separation from the currently desired balance might be a bit overstated, at least in the educational and cognitive realms. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the U.S. Army's overwhelmingly conventional and combat-centric culture has changed so much as to require rebalancing, particularly among more senior leaders and members of the combat arms branches.

Ultimately, it matters not whether the legacy or the adaptive organization prevails as long as the future force is best suited to conducting operations in support of strategy, within the confines of the international security environment, and against threats to U.S. interests. Adaptation will occur regardless of the choices made. But the United States government (and the security of its strategic interests) should not have to rely on the ingenuity and adaptability of soldiers if it reasonably could have anticipated the adaptations which needed to be made. The degree and level of adaptation necessary for achieving organizational goals within these parameters will serve as indicative indictment of the design's removal from the ideal organizational form. History will duly record this separation.

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by rejecting the fundamentals of the post-Cold War international security environment. Of course, this changed during the course of OIF. Lopez, Rafael, *Op Cit*, p. 19.

<sup>1179</sup> Ucko, David, "Innovation or Inertia: The U.S. Military and the Learning of Counterinsurgency," *Orbis*, Spring 2008, p. 301.



## 9.0 IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

*“No battle plan survives contact with the enemy.”*—Helmuth von Moltke

The U.S. Army crossed an operational rubicon during OIF. There is no longer a combat equivalent equilibrium to return to because the spectrum of conflict has essentially been collapsed, perhaps irrevocably. Since there are potentially infinite combinations of organizational forms and operational methods available to threat organizations, there is neither definition to nor finality on any band of the spectrum of conflict. Thus, success in modern warfare will require an ability to fuse and complete full spectrum tasks simultaneously. As long as national interests demand military strategies that provide some degree of stability and world order and as long as instability and violence plague the international security environment, the U.S. Army will have to be prepared to conduct the entire range of military operations and likewise will have to maintain a robust capacity for organizational adaptation.<sup>1180</sup>

Even if the U.S. government chooses not to intervene in destabilized areas where national interests are at stake, the U.S. Army must still maintain a capacity for restoring stability. In the

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<sup>1180</sup> While strategy may change, national interests are fixed in the near- to mid-term. Threats on the other hand will continue to evolve and undermine the current global order. Manwaring, Max G., *Shadows of Things Past and Images of the Future: Lessons for the Insurgencies in our Midst*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, November 2004.

future, events in the Western Hemisphere might overflow to directly threaten the continental United States. The key to retaining strategic flexibility will be continually resourcing the adaptability of the individual soldier and tactical organizations so that regardless of the environment they are deployed to they will be able to adapt and accomplish their missions, whether broad or narrow in scope. Considering the adaptive potential of numerous state and non-state adversaries, any organizational and operational weaknesses can and will be exploited. Organizational adaptability will keep open a range of strategic options whether or not they are pursued. With a larger force this is prudent; with a smaller force, this is necessary.

Leadership is important in this endeavor. Although not examined specifically in this study, leadership was at least in part responsible for freeing small-unit leaders to conduct independent operations and adapt in support of organizational goals. Decentralization in a hierarchical organization does not happen without managerial acquiescence and leader assent. In an adaptive contest, capacity must be massed while capability is dispersed among subordinate organizations. In Iraq, decentralization allowed for the generation of a patchwork quilt of innovation.<sup>1181</sup> A centralized, directed, and deliberate program of innovation would not have been nearly as effective in taking advantage of localized environmental and organizational knowledge or for spurring creative but effective changes to organizational inputs and outputs for mission success. But leadership was essential for ensuring that successful innovations and

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<sup>1181</sup> I would like to give credit for the term ‘patchwork quilt of innovation’ to Phil Williams. The U.S. Army shifted from a top-down system of innovation to a top-down/bottom-up system of innovation to a more flattened system where innovations went in and out of and across organizations. The insurgency largely maintained an in and out and across system of innovation (in the case of more centralized organizations like AQI, the system of innovation was top-down and across).

adaptations made by unencumbered small unit leaders spread within, across, and among organizations and were incorporated into the institution. Massing adaptive capabilities ensured that resources were efficiently and effectively appropriated (for the most part) in a coordinated fashion. Eventually, organizations were conducting well resourced adaptations that overwhelmed the adaptive and responsive capacities of the insurgency. In the near future, leadership will be critical for recognizing that individual soldiers are central to any organizational adaptation:

*“To institutionalize adaptability really takes attention to the Soldier as the key adaptable agent. Organizations do not ‘learn,’ but the people in them do. Empowered, those people can make necessary changes. Encouraging adaptability requires a combination of policy, recruitment/selection, and education.”*<sup>1182</sup>

Although technology, systems integration, and doctrine can contribute to a soldier’s and an organization’s adaptive capabilities they do not translate directly into capacity without the intervening influence of soldiers and organizations.<sup>1183</sup> Leadership can also ensure that subordinate organizations’ adaptive capacities are resourced through education, training,

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<sup>1182</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, E-mail Interview, 13 September 2008.

<sup>1183</sup> Scales warns against a fixation on technology. “Our fixation on technology—our very technological success—has led us to believe that the soldier is a system and the enemy is a target. Soldiers are now viewed, especially by this U.S. Defense Department, as an ‘overhead expense,’ not a source of investment.” Scales, Robert H., Statement for the Record, Senate Armed Services Committee, 25 April 2007, p. 1.

informal communication, changes in organizational culture,<sup>1184</sup> and relaxed controls on operations in conflict environments and exercises in garrison.

It is important to note that promoting organizational adaptation will not automatically translate into organizational success. If inappropriate plans, strategies, doctrines, and structures persist despite their ineffectiveness, organizations will find that they can adapt but not properly. For instance, even though lessons and adaptations drawn from operations in OIF are being applied in Afghanistan they might not be applicable to this environment especially if guided by an unsuitable strategy. While tactical U.S. Army units did adapt in Iraq despite a deeply flawed initial strategy and operational plan, efforts to resource this endeavor suffered accordingly and adaptation was slowed. A similar struggle might be unfolding in Afghanistan. Although the so-called ‘surge’ in Iraq allowed for the prosecution of a new strategy based on successful tactical adaptations, an equivalent surge in Afghanistan might be misguided. The findings of this study suggest that difficulties faced in Afghanistan are the result of at least three possibilities: 1) the Afghan insurgency is capable of making adaptations faster than the U.S. Army; 2) the Afghan insurgency is better resourced for making adaptations than the U.S. Army or;<sup>1185</sup> 3) U.S. Army

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<sup>1184</sup> Long argues that changes to organizational culture occurring during OIF may only be temporary. Long, Austin, *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006*, RAND Counterinsurgency Study Paper 6, 2008, p. 28.

<sup>1185</sup> Although this would seem unlikely given the preponderance of resources the United States (and other nations) is flooding into Afghanistan, resources are most effective when organizations are adapting in harmony, strategies and objectives are coherent and agreed upon, and when resources are dedicated to supporting organizational goals. If organizational goals are inappropriate, resourcing can have little effect or can be counterproductive—this depends on how inappropriate these organizational goals are. Furthermore, Afghanistan’s insurgent organizations seem to suffer from minimal organizational friction. Afghanistan’s insurgent network will

tactical organizations are adapting to an inappropriate strategy and thus inappropriate organizational goals.<sup>1186</sup> If the strategy employed in Afghanistan is misaligned with strategic intent, then all 3 possibilities could be true.

Insurgencies and other unconventional operations are adaptive contests. “Each tries to learn, adapt, and change what they are doing more quickly than the other.”<sup>1187</sup> Forming an adaptive organization and inculcating an adaptive mindset is a difficult task, no matter what the environment nor the threat organization being faced. In the absence of leadership emphasizing the necessity of and fostering organizational adaptation, the U.S. Army will likely rebalance towards a more familiar but less adaptive organizational form:

*“The Army’s natural tendency will be to gravitate back towards conventional high-end, high-intensity fighting and training for that. This is where the civilian leadership comes into play in the DOD and White House where they have to make it very clear to the armed forces that they have to be prepared for a wide range of conflicts and they can’t train to fight the kind of wars that they want to fight.”<sup>1188</sup>*

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inherently have vast adaptive potential and will be able to appropriately marshal even limited resources quickly, effectively, and efficiently.

<sup>1186</sup> For instance, if U.S. Army organizations are adapting towards an exit strategy (like what was tried in Iraq prior to a change in strategy and was suggested by President Obama at the United States Military Academy) then certainly their effectiveness at adapting and combating the insurgency will be reduced.

<sup>1187</sup> Metz, Steven, Current Operations and the Political Transition in Iraq, Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, 17 March 2005, p. 29.

<sup>1188</sup> Colonel (Ret.) Mansoor, Peter, Telephone Interview, 12 September 2008.

As Wong argues, “Adaptive leaders learn to live with unpredictability. They spend less time fretting about the inability to establish a routine or control the future and focus more on exploiting opportunities.”<sup>1189</sup> Failing to institutionalize the lessons of the adaptation that occurred during OIF will leave the U.S. Army unable to properly handle unpredictability and less capable of recognizing and exploiting opportunities as they present themselves in the future.

## **9.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. ARMY POLICY**

### **9.1.1 Strategy**

Recognizing instability as a threat to U.S. interests is a common theme of recent defense strategies and presidential directives. Developing supporting military strategies that correctly and effectively account for instability in the international security environment is thus fundamental. States and non-state actors and organizations can threaten stability by taking actions that disrupt the current world order and system of states. If stability of the global order (as it currently exists or has historically existed) is a desired end state and principal goal of strategy, then that is what military organizations should be primarily tasked to support and provide using a full spectrum of capabilities and methods. Supporting strategy with structures, doctrine, and training premised on a spectrum of conflict, in light of this strategic imperative, makes little sense. In a contest between forces of order and disorder, military strategy must

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<sup>1189</sup> Wong, Leonard, *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 2004, p. 11.

recognize that conditions dictate methods and not vice versa.<sup>1190</sup> Political and strategic contexts therefore should shape the future strategic direction of the U.S. Army.<sup>1191</sup> Combat, counterterrorism, humanitarian, and unconventional are terms used to describe operations or methods and capabilities merely facilitate operations. Stability is a condition or a desired end state that has political relevance and vitality. Creating stability in the types of likely future threat environments under consideration in this study requires full spectrum and significant organizational adaptation capabilities.

Since the beginning of the Transformation program, the Joint Staff, including the U.S. Army, has been mistaking objectives for actual strategy, capabilities for end states, and the preferred for the likely. This has caused confusion in threat perceptions and has masked the need for organizational adaptation to support national interests. Krepinevich argues that strategic publications in the 1990s, like Joint Vision 2020, indicated that ‘information superiority’ was the means for enabling ‘dominant maneuver,’ ‘precision engagement,’ ‘focused logistics,’ and ‘full-dimensional protection.’ Strategy was thus reduced to assertions “that the conditions desired will be achieved” and the need for considering resource limitations or enemy action was obviated. In

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<sup>1190</sup> Rogers contends that the current U.S. security paradigm is based on maintaining international stability premised on the status quo but that many states and sub-state groups are antagonistic to this security paradigm. See Rogers, Paul, “Losing Control—War and the Modern World,” *International Relations*, Volume 17, Number 1, 2003. See also, Fishel, John T. and Max G. Manwaring, *Op Cit*.

<sup>1191</sup> For discussion of transformation and the future of the U.S. Army see, Gray, Colin S. *Recognizing and Understanding Revolutionary Change in Warfare: The Sovereignty of Context*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 2006.

sum, the need for real strategy was assumed away.<sup>1192</sup> Other strategic requirements, such as the need for significant stability provisioning capabilities were also assumed away creating a substantial capability gap unrecognized by those enchanted with the possibilities engendered by Transformation, many of whose proponents argued for a shift away from threat-based planning to capabilities-based planning and operations. Ignoring the need for other-than-combat capabilities and mistaking objectives for strategy had significant operational consequences throughout the entire post-Cold War period. Strategy necessitates that this must change. “To be successful in future operations, the Army cannot look at operations today as temporary interruptions in preparing for major combat operations against a near-peer enemy. Nor can it afford to view operations dominated by the offense and defense and those dominated by stability as either/or propositions. Both usually occur simultaneously.”<sup>1193</sup> U.S. Army strategy must reflect national interests and be formed with due respect to organizations threatening these interests.

Differing levels of stability are likely to be acceptable in different areas of the world given national interests, strategic priorities, and perceptions of the enemy and risk. Stability in Europe is certainly strategically more important than say stability in Central Asia and providing stability in Bosnia might be less complex of a task than providing stability in Pakistan. In strategy and doctrine then, stability should be viewed on a continuous spectrum. Although Field Manual (FM) 3-07, Stability, does develop a fragile states framework and a fairly comprehensive

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<sup>1192</sup> Krepinevich, Andrew F., *7 Deadly Scenarios: A Military Futurist Explores War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Bantam Books, New York, 2009, Pp. 291-292.

<sup>1193</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 7-0, Training for Full Spectrum Operations, December 2008, p. 1-6.



set of stability operations tasks, this is not the same as developing a spectrum of stability; the spectrum of conflict is still the backdrop for Army operations.<sup>1194</sup> In this new paradigm, the level of stability required would dictate the operations and tasks chosen (combat, stability, offensive, defensive, humanitarian, counterdrug, counterterrorism, etc.). Instead of modifying conditions to tasks trained, tasks trained could be modified to effect desired conditions. Although this might seem like sleight of hand, it makes more sense to link tasks to desired end states than it does to link tasks to different levels or types of conflict. Conflict implies achieving victory through the imposition of military force; stability implies achieving a condition through the performance of a variety of fused tasks:

*“I think that the best thing that we can do would be to stop thinking about it [COIN] as a variant of war if we want to be effective at it and that is why I actually like the idea of stabilization operations...it implies that the endstate is a tolerable situation rather than decisive victory.”<sup>1195</sup>*

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<sup>1194</sup> I would like to credit Steve Metz for this concept. It evolved out of a conversation regarding future military strategy. From Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations, “The spectrum of conflict is the backdrop for Army operations. It places levels of violence on an ascending scale marked by graduated steps. The spectrum of conflict spans from stable peace to general war. It includes intermediate levels of unstable peace and insurgency. In practice, violent conflict does not proceed smoothly from unstable peace through insurgency to general war and back again. Rather, general war and insurgencies often spark additional violence within a region, creating broad areas of instability that threaten U.S. vital interests.” Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations, February 2008, p. 2-1.

<sup>1195</sup> Metz, Steven, Personal Interview, 6 November 2008.

The concept of victory is untidy in today's international security environment. "In modern wars such as Iraq and Afghanistan, there are no conventional enemies to be defeated on the battlefield, no opposing government from whom to formally accept surrender. Victory, in the end, is likely to involve a messy political compromise, perhaps with a remnant of low-level violence, and a more-or-less responsive government that is largely in control of its territory."<sup>1196</sup> A spectrum of stability would largely preclude any notions of victory in the traditional military sense and instead would put a focus on creating conditions to support national interests. This more accurately reflects the disposition of persistent enemies, their ability to sow instability, and the impossibility of causing their total surrender:

*"What I expect to happen as a phenomenon is for there to continue to be these kind of swarming insurgencies of small groups that are as much organized crime as they are political movements. And, at least my own belief is that, these things are really, really hard to eradicate but on the other hand, they are pretty easy to get to controllable levels to the point that they don't actually threaten to take down the state."*<sup>1197</sup>

It also recognizes the likelihood that the U.S. Army will be involved in stability operations for quite some time:<sup>1198</sup> "The spectrum of conflict provides an exceptional tool to visualize and

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<sup>1196</sup> Payne, Kenneth, "Waging Communication War," *Parameters*, Summer 2008, p. 50.

<sup>1197</sup> Metz, Steven, Personal Interview, 6 November 2008.

<sup>1198</sup> Szayna, Thomas S., et al, "Preparing the Army for Stability Operations: Doctrinal and Interagency Issues, RAND, Santa Monica, 2007. As Cragin and Gerwehr argue, "No one has discovered a 'silver bullet' to

describe the nature of the operational environment, but offers little insight about the actual operations conducted by military forces.”<sup>1199</sup> The spectrum of conflict should thus be replaced with a spectrum of stability in U.S. Army strategy and doctrine.

Focusing on stability in military strategy not only would better align military planning with national interests it would also help to synchronize tactical operations with political needs. Military strategies would then be less prone to failure, as in Vietnam and in Iraq prior to the surge.<sup>1200</sup> It would also elevate the importance of various forms of early intervention to provide stability before instability spreads from a city to a state or even to a region. As McMaster argues, “The best opportunity to defeat an insurgency is in its nascent stage.”<sup>1201</sup> The amount of time and resource shifting required for an organization to adapt to a given environment for the accomplishment of a mission is a measurement of the inappropriateness of organizational design and its preparation for goal accomplishment. Given current and likely future national and strategic security interests, preparing for operations on the spectrum of stability would ultimately reduce the severity of painful and lengthy prospective organizational adaptations.

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remove the threat of terrorism.” Cragin, Kim and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle against Terrorism*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2005, p. 70.

<sup>1199</sup> Turner, Frank L. II, “Full Spectrum Operations: an Analysis of Course Context at the Command and General Staff College,” School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 22 May 2008, p. 13.

<sup>1200</sup> Stephens, Bret, “There is a Military Solution to Terror,” *Wall Street Journal*, 3 June 2008.

<sup>1201</sup> McMaster, H. R., *Assessment of the Counterinsurgency Effort in Iraq*, Memorandum for General Abizaid, 10 December 2003, p. 2.

### 9.1.2 Planning

The U.S. Army's traditional planning procedures significantly disrupt the adaptive capacities of its subordinate organizations and leaders. Planning tends to assume sequential operations and a more static than dynamic or adaptive enemy. In fact, traditional planning procedures do not account well for adversary variability at all and tend to look past the possibility of multiple threat scenarios occurring within a single operation.<sup>1202</sup> The MDMP is far less abstract or multifaceted than what is required for unconventional operations against complex and adaptive threat organizations.<sup>1203</sup> Although useful against a doctrinal enemy and for teaching sequential modeling, modifying the MDMP for current operations is a difficult proposition at best:

*“In education, MDMP should be banned. It has run its course, and frankly, few real combat guys ever used it much. TLPs [Troop Leading Procedures] make sense, but in our schooling, we need to give leaders opportunity after opportunity to quickly (in minutes) formulate a working COA and get on with it.”<sup>1204</sup>*

Traditional planning tools, models and methodologies are premised on the conduct of more conventional operations against near-peer forces than on modern threat organizations and

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<sup>1202</sup> Lamb, Christopher J., *Transforming Defense*, National Defense University Press, Washington DC, September 2005, pp. 32-33.

<sup>1203</sup> Hales, Samuel E., *Op Cit*, p. 49.

<sup>1204</sup> Major General Bolger, Dan, E-mail Interview, 13 September 2008.

actors.<sup>1205</sup> These tools overemphasize process and simplicity over support and complexity. As Gray argues, “Happy is the defense planner who must devise ways to contend with a single kind of foe, in combat of known and predictable character, conducted by familiar methods with a stable arsenal, over issues, and in geography, that are thoroughly familiar.”<sup>1206</sup>

Although planning is important for command, control, and resourcing, it tends to restrain subordinate leader’s cognitive searches for alternatives and obstructs decentralized decision making when units are confronted with contingencies not accounted for in the initial plan—this occurs by design and by consequence depending on the leader and his or her confidence in subordinate leaders and their ability to rapidly and correctly adapt. “Lack of authority may neutralize a leader’s effectiveness, while detailed planning may substitute for leadership and make the leader redundant.”<sup>1207</sup> Adaptive adversaries are discounted in the planning process and unorthodox environments are poorly treated. Freedom of maneuver and decision making can suffer if a plan is too tightly followed. “Planning is an important and valuable C2 activity. However, focusing on the process for its own sake can lead to overcontrol and mechanical thinking. A properly framed commander’s intent, effective planning guidance, and judicious

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<sup>1205</sup> Clancy, James and Chuck Crossett, “Measuring Effectiveness in Irregular Warfare,” *Parameters*, Summer 2007, p. 88.

<sup>1206</sup> Gray, Colin S., *Recognizing and Understanding Revolutionary Change in Warfare: The Sovereignty of Context*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 2006, p. 15.

<sup>1207</sup> Wong, Leonard, *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, July 2004, p. 13.

participation by commanders create plans that foster mission command. Executing them creates a high tempo that allows maximum opportunity for exercising subordinates' initiative.”<sup>1208</sup>

Traditional planning procedures also fail to take into account the adaptive interactions between enemy and friendly organizations in dynamic environments and thus fail to help manage the second- and third-order effects of operations.<sup>1209</sup> This problem is aggravated further when planning is premised on phased operations in environments where traditional phases are difficult to discern, run in reverse, or are desynchronized. Dispensing with phases and sequencing is vital for adaptive planning and for resourcing flexible operations.<sup>1210</sup> Instead of a meticulous and sequential plan, commander's intent and detailed operational guidance might be sufficient to allow for self-synchronization and adaptation by subordinate leaders in a competitive environment. Recent experience supports this claim.<sup>1211</sup> Plans should be tailored to be more responsive and less prescriptive. Trying to script the adaptations of an enemy is a near impossible task, even with accurate intelligence. But forecasting friendly unit adaptations based on enemy tendencies and environmental conditions is possible and necessary, especially when operations are decentralized. Latitude must be given to subordinate leaders in plans. Planning

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<sup>1208</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-0, Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces, August 2003, p. 6-11.

<sup>1209</sup> Henke, Glenn A., “Planning Full Spectrum Operations: Implications of FM 3-0 on Planning Doctrine,” Military Review, November-December 2008, p. 100.

<sup>1210</sup> Bensahel, Nora, et al, After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq, RAND, Santa Monica, 2008, p. 242.

<sup>1211</sup> Vandergriff, Donald E., Future Leader: The Journey of Developing (and Nurturing) Adaptability, The Future is Now, Futures Center (Forward), 2 December 2005, p. 3.

then should focus on providing resources to leaders armed with a commander's guidance and with an end state in mind.

*"I think that the big change is, given the current operational environment, is to decentralize to the point of discomfort. You have to give young folks sufficient latitude to do that which they know needs to be done based on their personal understanding of the operational environment and try to fight the tendency to over-control your subordinates because that doesn't work in this current operational environment."*<sup>1212</sup>

### **9.1.3 Doctrine**

Since the end of the Cold War doctrine has reflected the legacy of the U.S. Army and its conditioned bias for planning, training, and conducting combat operations. Even recent doctrinal publications still retain vestiges of biased concepts that have significantly less relevance in the post-9/11 international security environment, however well disguised. For instance, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations, defines military power in more narrow traditional terms and extends the legacy argument that the military sets conditions while other elements of national power complete operations (despite a notable unavailability or uselessness of other elements of national power in recent conflicts): "Military power alone cannot, by itself, restore or guarantee stable peace. It must, however, establish global, regional, and local conditions that allow the other instruments of national power—diplomatic, informational, and economic—to exert their

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<sup>1212</sup> General (Ret.) Wallace, William, Personal Interview, 21 November 2008.

full influence.”<sup>1213</sup> Not only does this description of military power neglect what the U.S. Army was called upon to do in OIF and OEF, it also fails to account for operations in areas or environments where there is an absence of government and centralized and responsible decision makers—a fundamental likelihood in future operations. Diplomatic and economic instruments of national power are decidedly less effective in ungoverned areas or in complex insurgencies devoid of discernable leadership.

The previous quotation from FM 3-0 defies what is defined as the Army’s ‘new operational concept’: “The Army’s new operational concept has changed Army operations significantly. All operations are now full spectrum operations.”<sup>1214</sup> Field Manual (FM) 1 indicates a similar respect for and doctrinal shift in favor of current operations: “The skills and organizations required for operations against today’s threats are different from those of the recent past. The twentieth century required an Army with a large capacity focused on combat capabilities. Today’s operational environment requires an Army with more diverse capabilities as well as the capacity for sustained operations.”<sup>1215</sup> The first description (from FM 3-0) of what military power cannot do differs substantially from what it has been required to do and what doctrine says it should do. This description of military power is far less a ‘new operational concept’ than it is an old operational concept repackaged in ambiguous terms. Setting conditions for a stable peace does not obviate responsibility for then establishing and enforcing the peace: recent operations attest to this fact. Despite being published in 2008, FM 3.0 defines concepts and terms and describes conditions more relevant to 1989 than to the post-Cold War, post-9/11

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<sup>1213</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations, February 2008, p. 2-1.

<sup>1214</sup> Ibid, p. 1-3.

<sup>1215</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 1, The Army, June 2005, p. 4-8.



international security environment. The talking points used in newer versions of operations doctrine are updated for contemporary operations and duly note that full spectrum capabilities are *now* a priority (although ample evidence has been provided in this study to demonstrate that, at least rhetorically, full spectrum operations have been a ‘priority’ since at least 1991): “The Pentagon will adopt a new strategy that for the first time orders the military to anticipate that future conflicts will include a complex mix of conventional, set-piece battles and campaigns against shadowy insurgents and terrorists, according to senior officials. The shift is intended to assure that the military is prepared to deal with a spectrum of possible threats.”<sup>1216</sup> A description of what full spectrum operations entail (continuous, simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support tasks) is contained in both FMs 3-0 and 3-07.<sup>1217</sup>

Despite these changes and a renewed emphasis on full spectrum operations, doctrine is flawed in a number of significant ways. The lexicon used in doctrinal publications (to include terms defined in Joint Publication (JP 1-02) DOD Dictionary of Military Terms) still reflects an institutional bias for combat operations despite contemporary operational and strategic requirements. A lack of a common and relevant lexicon, particularly for simultaneous full spectrum operations, and a lack of new terms relevant to these operations can cause significant problems beyond the confusion created by ineffectively meshing old concepts with new operational realities. If EBO lexicon is used “for instance, in a disaster relief mission, the military viewing all the inhabitants of a country as ‘enemy decision makers’ may conflict with the view of the people held by several non-governmental agencies assisting in the relief effort.

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<sup>1216</sup> Shanker, Thom, “Pentagon to Outline Shift in War Planning Strategy,” The New York Times, 22 June 2009.

<sup>1217</sup> Pages 3-1 and 2-1, respectively.

This conflict of viewpoints could negatively affect the effective planning and execution of the mission.”<sup>1218</sup> Language is important as it symbolizes perceptions, intentions, and actions. Concepts are equally important. Breaking asunder simultaneous full spectrum operations into constituent parts creates an impression that operations are indeed separable and can be planned and trained for separately. Delineating between offensive, defensive, and stability operations does not really capture the complexity of the COE and leads U.S. Army units to suppose that these operations can be tangibly or cognitively separated into boxes as they appear in doctrine. Language to define and conceptual descriptions of operations contained in doctrine are vital for the conduct of operations: each shapes perceptions and both are used as authoritative guides for planning, training, and execution. Flaws that are the result of challenges associated with meshing old and new concepts must be removed lest they allow leeway for improper interpretation or cause confusion.

Doctrine provides fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application. If doctrine is flawed, it can inappropriately guide military forces or direct them in a fashion that does not support national objectives. If varying elements of doctrine are out of synch, military forces can be confused as to which doctrine is appropriate, whether or not new doctrine is prefaced with language indicating what other doctrine is superseded by the new publication. This is a fundamental flaw in post-Cold War and post-9/11 doctrine: it fails properly, comprehensively, and temporally to synchronize military actions with national objectives across the range of publications.

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<sup>1218</sup> Davidson, Michael L., Culture and Effects-Based Operations in an Insurgency, School of Advanced Military Studies U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 26 May 2005, p. 43.

In a rapidly changing security environment, doctrine must be dynamic but not so much that it is in constant flux. Without some continuity, doctrine would not provide fundamental principles but instead would generate confusion and would disrupt training and operational cycles. But doctrinal concepts should be reevaluated (again) in light of current strategic requirements and prospective operational realities. The publication of all doctrine (and the terms and concepts therein) should be synchronized on a timetable that is long enough to retain relevance but short enough to inculcate changes in the operational environment, lessons learned, and potential strategic shifts. Doctrine that is confusing, out of date, or in conflict with other doctrine can cause substantial problems limiting the adaptability of units (they are either improperly informed or are training to standards and concepts that are no longer relevant) and can disrupt the planning of and training for the conduct of operations (terms and tasks do not exist or are much less useful for simultaneous full spectrum operations).

#### **9.1.4 Training and Education**

Experiences in OIF demonstrated that decentralization and the rapid adjustment of organizational inputs and outputs was necessary to overcome an adaptive adversary. Decentralization requires leaders to disperse authority and responsibility in operations and in training. Subordinate leaders must be prepared to handle this authority in challenging environments and must be able to think and act quickly. Therefore, commanders must determine appropriate levels and balances of education and training and ensure that both are incorporated into any instructive program. Education provokes thinking and deliberation while training provokes reaction and reflexivity but both are requisite for conducting operations and for individual and organizational adaptation:

*“I think that it is possible to educate officers to be adaptive. I draw a distinction between training and education. Training is for a specific instance and is often reflexive. Officers have a responsibility for steering the shift and can be educated, for instance, in the theories of innovation, the strategic environment that they are going to face, changes to that environment, and taught to think through all those things. They can be taught patterns of thought and can be encouraged to think through those patterns of thought. And I think that when they do this they become more adaptive and help the institution become more adaptive as a result.”*<sup>1219</sup>

Kiszely agrees: “To be well prepared, officers will thus need to be both well trained and well educated (that is to say, having well-developed minds and understanding of the nature of the subject).”<sup>1220</sup> Officers and soldiers will need to be trained on and according to the adaptive process to achieve full spectrum capabilities.

Future operations are likely to require decentralization and adaptation to similar levels experienced in Iraq.<sup>1221</sup> Leaders and subordinates alike will have to: think “in terms of continuous, vice sequential, operations; lead widely dispersed, disparate forces to conduct operations while maintaining command and control via expanded and continuous commander’s

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<sup>1219</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Nagl, John, Telephone Interview, 14 September 2008.

<sup>1220</sup> Kiszely, John, Op Cit, p. 16.

<sup>1221</sup> For discussion of the requirements of modern warfare see, Janowitz, Morris, Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1977, p. 196.

intent.”<sup>1222</sup> Tillson makes a similar point, “A team that focuses on achieving the commander’s intent is more adaptable than a team that focuses on plan accomplishment. Similarly, a focus on predetermined performance standards and management objectives tends to reduce adaptability by preventing a team from setting its own goals.”<sup>1223</sup> Understanding a commander’s intent, the desired end-state, and key tasks necessary for achieving the commander’s intent and desired end-state are critical to the conduct of decentralized operations and for rapid organizational adaptation:

- Commander’s Intent: “A concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired end state. It may also include the commander’s assessment of the adversary commander’s intent and an assessment of where and how much risk is acceptable during the operation.”<sup>1224</sup> (expands range of tasks—should be left up to commander’s initiative with broad guidelines for tasks to be figured out by commander, assessed, and passed to other units, additionally, commanders can be assessed on their ability to foster adaptation in training).
- End State: “The set of required conditions that defines achievement of the commander’s objectives.”<sup>1225</sup>

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<sup>1222</sup> Multinational Interoperability Council, Op Cit, p. 2.

<sup>1223</sup> Tillson, John C. F., Op Cit, p. 36.

<sup>1224</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Washington DC, 12 April 2001 (As amended through 17 October 2008), p. 105.

<sup>1225</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02, Ibid, p. 187. Although there is no definitive characteristics of a successful end state, it can be evaluated according to a unit’s specific mission. Hunt, John B., “Thoughts on Peace Support Operations,” Military Review, October 1994.

- Key Tasks: “Those tasks that the force must perform as a whole or the conditions the force must meet to achieve the end state and stated purpose of the operation. Key tasks are not tied to a specific COA; rather, they identify what the force must do to achieve the end state. Acceptable COAs accomplish all the key tasks. In changed circumstances—when significant opportunities present themselves or the concept of operations no longer fits the situation—subordinates use key tasks to keep their efforts focused on achieving the commander’s intent. Examples of key tasks include terrain that must be controlled, the operation’s tempo and duration, and the operation’s effect on the enemy.”<sup>1226</sup>

A clear and practical commander’s intent will allow small unit leaders and soldiers to adapt tasks according to what is required by a particular mission.<sup>1227</sup> This will allow for flexibility in responses to unplanned for changes in the environment and unpredictable enemy actions:

*“I think that intent becomes more and more important, especially as you have operations that occur solely at a lower and lower level or more dispersed or are somewhat ambiguous, which, COIN, quite honestly can be. In the end, even if the task is done properly, if the mission is not accomplished or the intent is not accomplished, they realize that they might have to modify the task or use a different one because, especially in the environment that we are seeing here in Iraq, we have dispersed operations going on that are commanded and controlled*

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<sup>1226</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 5-0, Army Planning and Orders Production, January 2005, p. 3-6.

<sup>1227</sup> Smith, Niel, “Retaking Sa’ad: Successful Counterinsurgency in Tal Afar,” *Armor*, July-August 2007, p. 35.

*at a much lower level than you would have if you were moving an entire brigade, say, across the desert and therefore those decisions are made at a lower level and the response time becomes less and less.”<sup>1228</sup>*

Interestingly, this is not a new lesson nor is its applicability relevant only to modern operations; lessons regarding leader freedom to achieve a desired end state come out of operations from at least as far back as the Philippine Insurrection and actions taking place there: empowering leaders to experiment with tactics, techniques, and procedures to achieve missions while “adapting to local conditions” has been a staple of successful operations in challenging environments. “It was the initiative by soldiers at different levels that derived the principles and techniques that won America’s first victory in quelling an overseas insurrection.”<sup>1229</sup>

Accelerating adaptability and decentralization will require significant changes to standard training practices. Training will have to incorporate enhanced information sharing, dispersed decision making, and full spectrum capabilities and tasks:

*“I think that one of the key critical lessons that we’ve got to learn is the importance of the soldier in this particular kind of fight. We’ve got to be looking at systems that push information down to him. He as the strategic corporal can become better informed and better prepared to work in this new environment. Now, you can do that through training, you can do that through doctrine, but I*

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<sup>1228</sup> Major General Perkins, David, Telephone Interview, 21 September 2008.

<sup>1229</sup> Deady, Timothy K., “Lessons from a Successful Counterinsurgency: The Philippines, 1899-1902,” *Parameters*, Spring 2005, p. 67.

*think that it is absolutely critical that we get the training right, that we don't go back to that old spectrum of conflict, that linear kind of depiction of LIC on one end and HIC on the other end and that you train for either LIC or you train for HIC. I think that is absolutely wrong.”<sup>1230</sup>*

Additionally, training will have to focus more on destabilizing standard modes of thought and will have to force soldiers and leaders out of their comfort zones. Mastering tasks is not nearly as useful for expanding the adaptive capacity of soldiers as is forcing soldiers to incorporate and modify tasks to achieve a commander's intent. “Training for mastery places too much emphasis on mastering the routines of a particular task rather than on building a problem-solving repertoire.”<sup>1231</sup> Preparing soldiers and leaders for conducting simultaneous full spectrum operations to achieve commander's intent will also improve their capacities for conducting individual tasks across the range of military operations.<sup>1232</sup> Education and training should be meshed in a mutually beneficial program of instruction based on operational experience.

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<sup>1230</sup> General Chiarelli, Peter, Telephone Interview, 27 October 2008.

<sup>1231</sup> Tillson, John C. F., Op Cit, p. 36.

<sup>1232</sup> “Despite its disadvantages, an officer with better interpersonal and conceptual skills is often preferable to an officer with better tactical and technical skills. This fact alone prevents one from stating that a shift from a warfighting-based METL to a MOOTW-based METL would have a negative impact on the development of company grade, combat arms officers.” Birchmeier, Joseph F., The Impact of MOOTW-based Unit Training on Leader Development, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2000, pp. 39-40.



“Competencies are developed, sustained, and improved by performing one’s assigned tasks and missions.”<sup>1233</sup> Performance can be enhanced in training for application in real-world operations.

Adjusting training regimens to effectively incorporate full spectrum capabilities in the achievement of commander’s intent will require changes to the traditional, Cold War devised, standards-based model currently used in training. “The Cold War military learning system was predicated on individuals and units progressing so they could perform tasks sufficiently well to meet the standard. This standards-based system was revolutionary because it induced individual and collective accountability and demanded that all perform to a measurable level: The training proficiency of large organizations could therefore be collectively categorized with some degree of reliability. Today, it is no longer sufficient to merely meet the standard: A revised, more demanding measurement is necessary to determine squad and platoon proficiency. Meeting the standard should be replaced with a new set of open-ended performance criteria. The standard is now a limiting factor in shaping the performance of highly capable and well-bonded units. Thus, units today really do not know how good they can actually be.”<sup>1234</sup> While the U.S. Army is interested in creating pioneering and adaptive leaders through training, it has created a hidebound system that stifles innovation:

*“We used to criticize the Soviets for a lack of innovation and guess what we did?  
We created a system that stifles initiative. We used to say that the biggest*

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<sup>1233</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile, October 2006, p. 2-8.

<sup>1234</sup> Scales, Robert H., “The Second Learning Revolution,” Military Review, January-February 2006, pp. 39-40.

*advantage that we have over the Soviets is that they don't have any initiative. We then created a system to counter that but it stifles initiative. It is ironic. I think that everyone is catching on but in garrison it is really difficult to do. QTBs [Quarterly Training Briefs] are not briefed on how well you developed your leaders, it is briefed on your vehicles, your training, and it is very quantitative when you are talking about something that is very qualitative. If you are the boss, you don't want to risk USR stats and develop a leader at the risk of your USR stats."*<sup>1235</sup>

The current training regimen of Tasks, Conditions, and Standards should be replaced with something that incorporates current operational experiences, commander's intent, and enhanced evaluative practices. Traditional training for tactical and technical capacities should be supplemented with training that emphasizes adaptability, deliberation, thinking, *and* reflexivity. Scarce time must be managed effectively: training will have to be as full spectrum as current operations. Therefore, any new training format should include Intent, Conditions, and Evaluation to better reflect expanded operational needs.<sup>1236</sup> Moreover, training and operations should specifically address adaptation, both friendly and enemy, in the reporting and review

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<sup>1235</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Wong, Leonard, Personal Interview, 6 November 2008.

<sup>1236</sup> Although 'Evaluation' may appear to be too generalized, this should not be considered a fault. A directed but open evaluation methodology would enable commanders, trainers, observers, controllers, and small unit leaders to apply their own operational knowledge and experience to the evaluative process. Evaluations would be standardized in form but not in content and thus would provide rich descriptive material for incorporation across units and the force.

process occurring after any organizational action or exercise. “After Action Reviews (AARs), must expand to address adaptability, innovation, and outcomes rather than performance to standard. Mentors and observer/controllers must focus more on the thinking process that led to an operational decision more than on the correctness of the decision itself. The focus must be on how to think more than what to think.”<sup>1237</sup>

These changes are not only desirable, they might be necessary for incorporating well experienced junior leaders into the force and for ensuring that the adaptations that they made during OIF are put to good use by the institution. “Considering that most newly minted O-1’s have not known the world of the Cold War and its relatively static strategic and operational constructs there is no need to break them of a Cold War mode of thinking. In fact the military is seeing in Iraq that younger officers are welcoming of the challenges they are confronting. They are doing a good job, but many may vote with their feet if they are required to return to a system that once back from the battlefield operates in an Industrial Age fashion and stifles creativity and

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<sup>1237</sup> Tillson, John C. F., Op Cit, p. 36. All units are required to send AARs and other lessons learned materials to CALL. Furthermore, the U.S. Army has implemented a program requiring unit members attend the CALL course. The lessons learned process (LLP) is “a deliberate and systematic process for collecting and analyzing field data and disseminating, integrating, and archiving observations, insights, and lessons collected from Army operations and training events.” Lessons Learned is defined by CALL as “Validated knowledge and experience derived from observations and the historical study of military training, exercises, and combat operations that leads to a change in behavior at either the tactical (standard operating procedures (SOP), TTP, and so forth), operational, or strategic level or in one or more of the Army’s DOTMLPF domains.” See, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation (AR) 11-33, Army Lessons Learned Program (ALLP), Washington DC, 17 October 2006, pp. 3-10. Certainly, given its importance, adaptation(s) can be added to this process and its supporting procedures.

opportunities to learn. Unfortunately the current leadership system continues the practice of producing technical/tactical experts that are offered no incentives for thought or experiences outside the relatively narrow confines of branch or community norms regarding career progression.”<sup>1238</sup>

## **9.2 FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **9.2.1 Theoretical Implications**

Mutual adaptations made in Iraq by the insurgency and the U.S. Army are perceptible based on empirical evidence and are understandable when tempered by organizational behavior theory. Although the findings of this research might not necessarily be generalizable outside martial organizations in hostile competitive environments, the functions charted in the process of mutual adaptation illuminate the strengths, weaknesses, and adaptability of networks and hierarchies in competition. This analysis is based on the pace and resourcing of adaptations determined by each organization’s capacity for manipulating organizational inputs and outputs in the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.

Although theoretically, hierarchical organizations are slow to adapt in rapidly changing environments, they can enhance their adaptive capacity through decentralization. Decentralization is aided by robust communications, the devolution of command relationships,

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<sup>1238</sup> Jones, John-Michael, Building Leaders and Staffs: Ensuring Mastery of the Non-Major Combat Aspects of War, School of Advanced Military Studies U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 16 May 2005, pp. 37-38.

and junior leader empowerment with training, experience, and enhanced communications. Adaptation is accelerated by infusing the hierarchical institution with adaptations developed at the organizational level; in this case, at the tactical unit level. The hierarchical organization can morph into a well resourced and networked organization by using higher-level institutional elements to provision resources and conduct analysis and by using lower-level organizational elements for action, environmental interpretation, and manipulation of organizational inputs and outputs to achieve organizational goals.

Theoretically, networked organizations are quick to adapt in rapidly changing environments and can quickly inculcate lessons and innovations into organizational processes and procedures to effect goal-directed organizational change. While this is true, networks that are too diverse and have too many competing organizational goals tend to suffer from inter-organizational friction and internal competition. Adaptive speed is retained but it might be directed towards competing and redundant goal accomplishment thus reducing the overall effectiveness of the network for accomplishing shared organizational goals.

### **9.2.2 Summary of Findings**

- Organizational adaptation in a competitive environment is by and large an informal process but can be accelerated or retarded by organizational composition and design. Though human actors are the change agents in an organization and their skills, knowledge, training, education, capability, and experience are determinant of any organizational change, the organization (via design and informal barriers such as culture and knowledge bases) has significant influence over whether or not this potential for change is actualized.

- Small networks tend to adapt faster than large organizations, particularly in respect to large hierarchies in a competitive environment. But as small networks demonstrate an ability to adapt faster, there is a tradeoff for this adaptive capability: robustness and aggregated effects (i.e., an ability to accomplish mission or organizational goals) are weakened by organizational size and composition. Size limits the breadth of effects and composition creates a diversity of objectives and cleavages that weaken cooperative efforts in the achievement of mutually shared organizational goals. A hierarchy is better situated to accomplish more complex, durable, and layered goals requiring greater analysis and with broader effect while a network is better situated to detect changes in environmental stimuli and adapting tactically, locally, and in the short-term.
- The organization with greater resources and a corresponding ability to support smaller attendant organizations maintains a greater capacity for swarming (by developing better situational understanding and communications among subordinate organizations) and rapid dispersal (by providing organic protected transportation and various other means of logistical support): a significant tactical capability in a complex environment that contributes not only to force protection but also to adaptation as fewer organizational resources need to be dedicated to covering and concealment operations and situational force protection.
- Time is a significant factor for organizational adaptation. A hierarchical organization takes longer to adapt but can have a greater effect in the long run. A network can adapt rapidly but has a diminished capacity for accomplishing organizational goals (because of its structure and inherent capacity) in the short- and long-run. Its only means for achieving broader effects is by sufficiently controlling (and thus diminishing the strength

of) an informal network of similarly goal oriented smaller organizations through close collaboration. Thus, if larger and better resourced, hierarchical organizations can adapt at a greater or equal pace to their competitor(s), by supporting or creating informal and formal structures that aid internal and external networking, they will be more successful in a competitive environment. Creating a capacity to adapt rapidly will allow a hierarchical organization to accomplish its mission or goals more quickly, while bringing to bear greater resources, and will diminish the capabilities of any competing networked organization operating in the same environment.

- For comprehensive organizational adaptation to occur—to achieve tactical, operational, and strategic goals and objectives—an organization must have a range of resources available to adapt at levels that the organization aspires to affect. If an organization does not have the tools necessary to adapt at the strategic level then its ability to affect that level with any significant or coherent impact is necessarily truncated. This is not to say that tactical operations do not have strategic effects in a complex insurgency, they do, but making organizational adaptations across multiple levels requires resources and capacities dedicated to achieving this effect.

### **9.3 CONCLUSION**

Combat is being supplanted by stability as the principal task for U.S. Army forces in the current international security environment. This does not mean that combat is less important than it once was or that it is unimportant. Rather, combat and offensive and defensive operations should be thought of with respect to how they support national security and the strategic objectives of

preserving international stability and suppressing adaptive threat organizations. Instead of thinking of traditional tasks separately, “the military and other government agencies must pursue ways to integrate them, thus assuring that the United States can address the multi-dimensional threats which characterize the contemporary security environment.”<sup>1239</sup> Although the U.S. Army “has been organized and trained primarily to fight and win the nation’s major wars”<sup>1240</sup> it must now be organized and trained to accelerate its adaptive capacity and to exploit the beam of fused full spectrum strengths it developed during the course of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

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<sup>1239</sup> Wipfli, Ralph, and Steven Metz, Op Cit, p. 1.

<sup>1240</sup> Crane, Conrad C. and W. Andrew Terrill, Op Cit, p. 54.



## APPENDIX A

### KEY TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

#### A.1 KEY TERMS<sup>1241</sup>

<b>Commander's Intent</b>	A concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired end state. It may also include the commander's assessment of the adversary commander's intent and an assessment of where and how much risk is acceptable during the operation. <sup>1242</sup>
<b>Contingency</b>	A situation requiring military operations in response to natural disasters, terrorists, subversives, or as otherwise directed by appropriate authority to protect U.S. interests.*
<b>Counterinsurgency</b>	Military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.*
<b>Course of Action</b>	Any sequence of activities that an individual or unit may follow.*
<b>Doctrine</b>	Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.*

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<sup>1241</sup> \* Indicates that the term is defined in Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 12 April 2001, as amended through 31 October 2009.

<sup>1242</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency, 2006.

<b>End State</b>	The set of required conditions that defines achievement of the commander's objectives.*
<b>Improvised Explosive Device (IED)</b>	A device placed or fabricated in an improvised manner incorporating destructive, lethal, noxious, pyrotechnic, or incendiary chemicals and designed to destroy, incapacitate, harass, or distract. It may incorporate military stores, but is normally devised from nonmilitary components.*
<b>Insurgency</b>	An organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control. <sup>1243</sup>
<b>Key Tasks</b>	Those tasks that the force must perform as a whole or the conditions the force must meet to achieve the end state and stated purpose of the operation. Key tasks are not tied to a specific COA; rather, they identify what the force must do to achieve the end state. Acceptable COAs accomplish all the key tasks. In changed circumstances—when significant opportunities present themselves or the concept of operations no longer fits the situation—subordinates use key tasks to keep their efforts focused on achieving the commander's intent. Examples of key tasks include terrain that must be controlled, the operation's tempo and duration, and the operation's effect on the enemy.*
<b>Military Transformation</b>	A process that shapes the changing nature of military competition and cooperation through new combinations of concepts, capabilities, people and organizations that exploit our nation's advantages and protect against our asymmetric vulnerabilities to sustain our strategic position, which helps underpin peace and stability in the world. <sup>1244</sup>
<b>Mission</b>	A duty assigned to an individual or unit; a task.*
<b>Mutual Adaptation</b>	A complex process of learning and change where two organizations are engaged in a cycle of action, reaction, and subsequent organizational adaptation.

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<sup>1243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1244</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald, Transformation Planning Guidance, U.S. Department of Defense, April 2003.

<b>Objective</b>	The clearly defined, decisive, and attainable goal toward which every operation is directed.*
<b>Operation</b>	A military action or the carrying out of a strategic, operational, tactical, service, training, or administrative military mission.*
<b>Organizational Adaptation</b>	A complex process of learning and change where organizational actions are taken and assessed leading to an adjustment of organizational inputs and outputs to synchronize adaptation(s) with organizational goals and missions.
<b>Procedures</b>	Standard, detailed steps that prescribe how to perform specific tasks.*
<b>Simultaneous Full-Spectrum Capability</b>	A capacity for conducting a number of tasks across the range of military operations within a single mission or operation or in the achievement of a single objective.
<b>Strategy</b>	A prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives.*
<b>Tactics</b>	The employment and ordered arrangement of forces in relation to each other.*
<b>Techniques</b>	Non-prescriptive ways or methods used to perform missions, functions, or tasks.*
<b>Troop Leading Procedures</b>	Sequence of actions that enable the company commander (or platoon leader) to use available time effectively and efficiently in the planning, preparing, executing, and assessing of combat missions. <sup>1245</sup>

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<sup>1245</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-21.91 Tactical Employment of Antiarmor Platoons and Companies, 26 November 2002, p. 2-1.

## **A.2 ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AAN	Army After Next
AAR	After Action Report (or Review)
ABCS	Army Battle Command System
ACR	Armored Cavalry Regiment
ADM	Acquisition Decision Memorandum
AFATDS	Army Field Artillery Tactical Data System
ALLP	Army Lessons Learned Program
AMDWS	Air and Missile Defense Work Station
AOR	Area of Responsibility
AQI	Al-Qaeda, Iraq
AR	Army Regulation
ARFORGEN	Army Forces Generation
ARSOF	Army Special Operations Forces
ASAS	All Source Analysis System
BCKS	Battle Command Knowledge System
BCS3	Battle Command Sustainment Support System
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
C2	Command and Control
C3	Command, Control, and Communications
C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
CA	Civil Affairs

CAC	Combined Arms Center
CALL	Center for Army Lessons Learned (Fort Leavenworth, KS)
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear
CENTCOM	Central Command (also USCENTCOM)
CFLCC	Combined Forces Land Component Command
CGSS	Command and General Staff School (Fort Leavenworth, KS)
CJCS	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CLCs	Concerned Local Citizens
CMET	Core Mission Essential Task(s)
COA	Course of Action
COE	Contemporary Operational Environment
COIN	Counter-insurgency (Operations)
COMINT	Communications Intelligence
COP	Combat Outpost
COTs	Commercial Off-The-Shelf Technologies
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CS	Combat Support
CSS	Combat Service Support
CTC	Combat Training Centers
CTR	Close Target Reconnaissance
DA	Direct Action
	Department of the Army

DA PAM	Department of the Army Pamphlet
DMET	Directed Mission Task
DOD	(U.S.) Department of Defense
DOS	(U.S.) Department of State
DOTMLPF	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, and Facilities
DVD	Digital Video Disc
EBO	Effects-Based Operations
EBP	Effects-Based Planning
EFP	Explosively Formed Penetrators (or Projectiles)
EW	Electronic Warfare
EXORD	Execution Order
FA	Field Artillery
FAO	Foreign Area Officer
FBCB2	Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below
FCS	Future Combat System
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FIST	Fire Support Team
FM	Field Manual
	Frequency Modulation
FOB	Forward Operating Base
FRE	Former Regime Elements
FSO	Fire Support Officer
GIG	Global Information Grid

GWOT	Global War on Terror
HIC	High-Intensity Conflict
HMMWV	High-Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle
HN	Host Nation
HOA	Horn of Africa
HSOC	Home Station Operations Centers
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IAI	Islamic Army in Iraq
ICBM	Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile
ICE	IED Countermeasures Equipment
ID	Infantry Division
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IIS	Iraqi Intelligence Service (Mukhabarat)
ING	Iraqi National Guard
INP	Iraqi National Police
INTSUM	Intelligence Summary
IO	Information Operations
IP	Internet Protocol
IR	Infra-Red
IRAM	Improvised Rocket-Assisted Munition/Mortar
IRGC	Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps
IPB	Intelligence Preparation (of the) Battlefield
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces

ISI	Islamic State of Iraq
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance
IT	Information Technology(ies)
JAG	Judge Advocate General
JAM	Jaysh al Mahdi
JAMI	Islamic Front of the Iraqi Resistance
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFC	Joint Force(s) Command (or Commander)
JIEDDO	Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization
JMRC	Joint Multinational Readiness Center (Grafenwoehr, Germany)
JOE	Joint Operational Environment
JP	Joint Publication
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Center (Fort Polk, LA)
JTF	Joint Task Force
JV 2010	Joint Vision 2010
KFOR	Kosovo Force
LACE	Liquids, Ammunition, Casualties, Equipment (Report)
LIC	Low-Intensity Conflict
LLP	Lessons Learned Process
LNO	Liaison Officer
LOGPAC	Logistics Package
MCO	Major Combat (or Contingency) Operations
MCS	Maneuver Control System



MCTC	Maneuver Combat Training Center
MDMP	Military Decision Making Process
MET	Mission Essential Task(s)
METL	Mission Essential Task List
MICCC	Military Intelligence Captain's Career Course
mIRC	(Multi-User) Internet Relay Chat
MNF-I	Multi-National Forces-Iraq
MOE	Measures of Effectiveness
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MOUT	Military Operations on Urban Terrain
MRAP	Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (Vehicle)
MRC	Major Regional Conflict
MRE	Mission Readiness Exercise
MSC	Mujahideen Shura Council
MTOE	Modified Table of Organization & Equipment
MTT	Mobile Training Team
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NDP	National Defense Panel
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIRF	Neutralizing Improvised Explosive Devices with Radio Frequency
NLOS	Non-Line of Sight

NLOS-C	Non-Line of Sight Canon
NSS	National Security Strategy
NSVI	National Strategy (for) Victory (in) Iraq
NTC	National Training Center (Fort Irwin, CA)
OASD-	
SO LIC	Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special OperationsLow-Intensity Conflict
OCF-I	Other Coalition Forces-Iraq
ODA	Operational Detachment-Alpha
OEF	Operation ENDURING FREEDOM
OER	Officer Evaluation Report
OIF	Operation IRAQI FREEDOM
OOTW	Operations Other Than War
OPFOR	Opposing Forces
OPSUM	Operations Summary
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PA	Public Affairs
PH IV	Phase Four (Operations)
PL	Public Law
PMC	Private Military Contractor
PME	Professional Military Education
POI	Program of Instruction
POM	Program Objective Memorandum

PPBS	Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System
PSP	Private Security Personnel
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review (Report)
QTB	Quarterly Training Brief
RDO	Rapid Decisive Operations
RFF	Request for Forces
RIF	Reduction in Forces
RFI	Rapid Fielding Initiative
	Request for Information
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
ROE	Rules of Engagement
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
ROW	Rest-of World
RPG	Rocket-Propelled Grenade
RSTA	Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition
RTV	Remote Television (Camera)
S2	Unit Intelligence and Security Staff Officer
SALT	Size, Activity, Location, Time (Report)
SALUTE	Size, Activity, Location, Uniform, Time, Equipment (Report)
SBCT	Stryker Brigade Combat Team
SF	Special Forces

SFOR	Stabilization Force Bosnia and Herzegovina
SGC	Special Group Criminals
SIPRnet	Secret Internet Protocol Router (Network)
SO	Special Operations
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure(s)
SOSO	Stability Operations and Support Operations
SR	Special Reconnaissance
SRO	Stability and Reconstruction Operations
SSR	Stability, Support and Reconstruction (Operations)
SSTR	Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction
STX	Squad Training Exercise
SVBIED	Suicide Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device
TLP	Troop Leading Procedure(s)
TO&E	Table of Organization and Equipment
TPFDD	Time-Phased Force and Deployment Data
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command (Fort Monroe, VA)
TTP	Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UE <sub>x</sub>	Unit of Execution (x)
UE <sub>y</sub>	Unit of Execution (y)
UGV	Unmanned Ground Vehicle
UN	United Nations

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USR	Unit Status Reporting
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VBIED	Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device
VTC	Video Tele-Conference
WARNORD	Warning Order
WMD	Weapon(s) of Mass Destruction
WOT	War on Terror

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INSURGENTS, TARGETS, AND TYPES OF ATTACK<sup>1246</sup>**

#### **B.1 INDICATIONS AND PATTERNS**

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<sup>1246</sup> This analysis broke down over 13,000 incidents and insurgent attacks drawn from three incident tracking websites: National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) Worldwide Incident Tracking System ([wits.nctc.org](http://wits.nctc.org)); [icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org) and; [iraqbodycount.org](http://iraqbodycount.org). This analysis focused on the 7 most violent provinces in Iraq (as measured by frequency of incidents and casualties) and the major cities in these provinces. These websites provide information on attacks (both lethal and injurious) but are not comprehensive (in the course of events, some attacks were not reported or were not reported accurately); duplicates were removed. The purpose of these charts is to demonstrate a pattern of insurgent attacks and targets across provinces from the beginning of OIF through mid-2008. Attribution is almost impossible: “Experts indicate any efforts to make precise attributions of attacks by attacker were uncertain.” See, Cordesman, Anthony H., *Iraq’s Sunni Insurgents: Looking Beyond Al Qa-ida*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 16 July 2007. The list of insurgent groups was drawn from MNF-I and from the incident tracking sites referenced above. The patterns observed in each province (and the city(ies) examined therein) is generally similar (type of attack and target selection). Deviations were small but include: 1) In Ramadi, attacks on police increased as compared to attacks on various targets and; 2) In Kirkuk, IED attacks increased as compared to armed attacks.

- Over the period of time analyzed, insurgent attacks became more complex (combined assaults, multi-method attacks), catastrophic (number of deaths and injuries), and exotic (use of chemical-laden explosives, propane tank bombs, female suicide bombers, etc.). This evolution indicates adaptations made by the insurgency in response to increased and improved security measures taken by the counterinsurgency. For instance, in reaction to better tactics and responses by military forces, the insurgency increased the use of IEDs against the counterinsurgency (to improve stand-off distances); increased attacks on softer targets (police and civilians) and with less sophisticated weapons (small arms assaults, simple bombs, fire-bombs). Even as insurgent methods shifted toward more powerful and catastrophic attacks, these attacks were targeted against softer targets (police and civilians).<sup>1247</sup>
- The general pattern of insurgent attacks indicates an increasing interest in avoiding direct contact with well armed counterinsurgent forces and a preference for attacking ‘softer’ civilian targets to achieve similar effects (disorder, disruption of state forces, portraying the Coalition as illegitimate and ineffective, etc.). In an attempt to create chaos and disrupt the counterinsurgency, the insurgency could support the same strategy (either to cause chaos or disrupt the counterinsurgency) by attacking different targets or by increasing the frequency of attacks.

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<sup>1247</sup> Cordesman argues that much of insurgent activity consisted of “bombings of soft civilian targets designed largely to provoke a more intense civil war or halt the development of an effective Iraqi government, rather than progress towards control at even the local level.” See Cordesman, Anthony H. *The Iraq War and Lessons for Counterinsurgency*, CSIS, 16 March 2006, p. 3.

- Insurgent modifications indicate not only a shift in targeting over the long term (military-police-civilians) but also the weakness of the insurgency as a networked organization. Because of a requirement for a degree of if not total anonymity, the insurgency was unable to take full advantage of networking resources (internet, communications, enduring synchronized attacks, etc.) and mass its effects through sustained and coordinated attacks or complimentary and organized military-style operations over long periods of time. The method of the insurgency was one of ‘pinpricks’ to cause general disruptions and to use time, dispersion, and secrecy as weapons. The networked insurgency had to make significant modifications because it was not an ideally formed organization for the realization of broader organizational (or strategic) goals (defeating the counterinsurgency, subverting the Iraqi government, forcing the U.S. Army to vacate the counterinsurgent effort, etc.). In effect, the insurgency was only truly capable of sowing mass disorder and chaos but was incapable of accomplishing few long-term or positive goals.
- The insurgency in Iraq was sophisticated in its ability to independently coordinate efforts through spontaneously developed (and dissolved) and persistent networks but unsophisticated in its methods (e.g., IEDs (although deadly), the use of small arms, and the intermittent use of cellular telephony and the internet). The methods of the Iraqi insurgency are not indicative of a ‘technologically advanced’ adversary imagined in many strategic planning documents. Instead, the insurgency, over time, used less and less sophisticated means (within complex methods) to achieve organizational ends. The realization of technical, material, and tactical superiority of the U.S. Army and other



counterinsurgent forces, through multiple and varied interactions and mutual adaptations, in many ways dictated insurgent adaptation to this effect.

- The insurgency in Iraq demonstrated that an unsophisticated but networked force could cause significant disruptions to the operations of a massive, hierarchical, and technologically advanced force by resorting to means that defy the strengths of the stronger force. Once the hierarchical force itself adopted sophisticated networked operations, and as the insurgency fractured over varying and conflicting organizational goals, many insurgent advantages diminished and/or accrued to the counterinsurgency.

## B.2 INSURGENT GROUPS IN IRAQ

**Table 3.** Insurgent groups that have operated or have conducted attacks in Iraq

1920 Revolution Brigades	Islamic Army in Iraq
Abu al-Abbas	Islamic Front for Iraqi Resistance Salah-al-Din-al-Ayyubi Brigades
Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Fundamentalists Brigades	Islamic Jihad Brigades
Abu Nidal Organization	Islamic Movement of Holy Warriors
al-Ahwal Brigades	Islamic Mujahadeen Battalion
al-Bara bin Malek Brigades	Islamic Rage Brigade
al-Faruq Brigades	Islamic Resistance Brigades
al-Fursan Brigades	Jaish al-Taifa al-Mansoura
Ali Bin Abu Talib Jihad Organization	JAM
al-Imam Ali Brigades	Jama'at al-Tawhid Wa'al-Jihad
Al-Muslimin Army	Jaysh al-Muslimin
al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers	Jihad Pegah
Ansar al-Din	Jihadist Squadrons
Ansar al-Islam	Just Punishment Brigades
Ansar al-Jihad	Karbala Brigades
Ansar al-Sunnah	Kat'ib al-Junayd al-Jihadiyah
Arab Liberation Front	Kurdish Democratic Party
Arab Revolutionary Brigades	Kurdistan Freedom Hawks
Army of the Followers of Sunni Islam	Mahdi Army
Banner of Islam	Movement of Islamic Action of Iraq
Battalion of the Look-out for Iraq	MSM
Brigade of Ansar al-Tawhid Wa-Sunna	Muad Ibn Jabal Brigade
Brigades for the Defense of Holy Shrines	Mujahadeen Army
Brigades of Imam al-Hassan al-Basri	Mujahadeen Shura Council
Brigades of Martyr Ahmed Yassin	Mujahadeen-e-Khalq
Brigades of the Victorious Lion of God	Ninawa Mujahadeen in the City of Mosul
Death Squad of Mujahadeen of Iraq	Palestine Liberation Front
Dhi Qar Organization	Partisans of the Sunni
DII	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
Divine Wrath Brigades	Protectors of Islam Brigade
Fallujah Mujahadeen	Punishment Brigade for the al-Jaafari Government
General Command of Jihadist Armed Forces	QJBR
Green Brigade of the Prophet	Reform and Jihad Front
Hawk Brigades	Saad bin Abi Waqas Brigades
IAI	Saraya al-Shuhada al-Jihadiyah fi al-Iraq
Imam Hussein Brigades	Saraya Usud al-Tawhid
Iraq Liberation Army	Shield of Islam
Iraqi Democratic Front	Soldiers of the Prophet's Companion
Iraqi Jihadist Leagues	SSP
Iraqi Legitimate Resistance	Swords of Righteousness Brigades
Iraqi Revenge Brigades	Tawid and Jihad
Islamic Action in Iraq	The Group for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice
Islamic Action Organization	The Holders of the Black Banners
Islamic al-Waggas Brigade	United Organization of Halabjah Martyrs
Islamic Anger Brigade	Usd Allah
Islamic Army in Iraq	

## B.3 NOTES ON TARGETS AND TYPE OF ATTACKS

**Table 4.** Modifications and Categorizations of Target Types

Target Type: Commercial	Target Type: Educational	Target Type: Foreign Government
Comedian	Scholars Association Member	Embassy
Contractor	Teacher	UN
Day Laborer	School	
Defense Lawyer	University	
Doctor	Professor	
Healthcare Worker	Student	
Pharmacist		
Pipeline		
Hospital		
Security Contractor		
Security Guard		
Body Guard (unless otherwise indicated)		
Shops		
Marketplace		
Contractor Relatives		
Theater		
Target Type: Government	Target Type: Iraqi Army	Target Type: Media
Communications Tower	FPS to Iraqi Army	Radio Station
Election Worker		Journalist
Drive of Official		Media Cameraman
Government Contractor		
Judge		
Near Passport Office		
Party Members and Leaders		
Political Affiliate		
Political Party Member		
Politically Affiliated Person		
Politician		
Target Type: NGO	Target Type: Police	Target Type: Religious
Humanitarian	Firefighter	Cleric
	Man in Police Car	Mosque
	Neighborhood Patrols and Security	Religious
	Paramedic	Pilgrimage
	Police Station	Near Mosque
	Police Training	
	Rescue Worker	
Target Type: Translator	Target Type: Tribal	Target Type: U.S. Military
Interpreter	Sheik	U.S. Military
	Tribes	
Target Type: Various		
Civilian		
Vehicles		
Houses		
Communities		
General		

**Table 5.** Modifications and Categorization of Attack Types<sup>1248</sup>

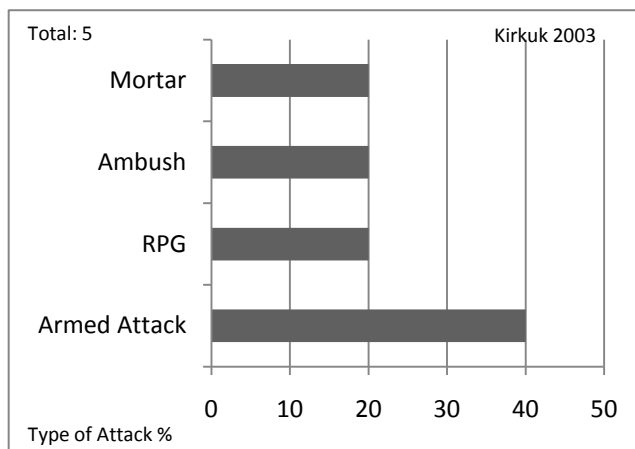
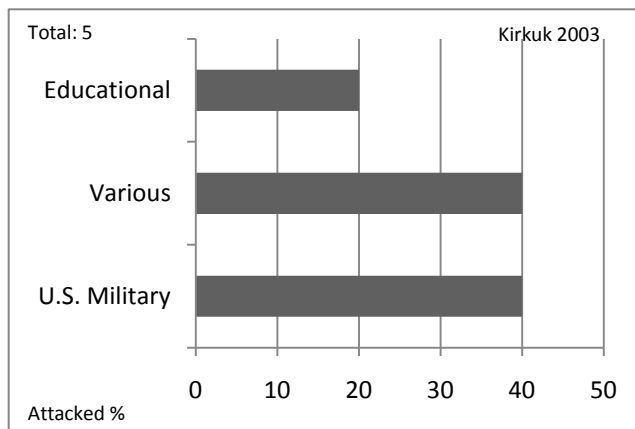
<b>Attack Type: Armed Attack</b>	<b>Attack Type: Arson</b>	<b>Attack Type: Assassination</b>
Stabbing	Incendiary	Assassination
Assault	Firebombing	
Small Arms		
<b>Attack Type: Beheading</b>	<b>Attack Type: Bombing</b>	<b>Attack Type: Booby Trap</b>
Decapitation	Explosion	Booby Trap
<b>Attack Type: CBRN</b>	<b>Attack Type: Drowning</b>	<b>Attack Type: EFP</b>
CBRN	Drowning	EFP
Chlorine Bomb		
<b>Attack Type: Execution</b>	<b>Attack Type: Female Suicide Bomber</b>	<b>Attack Type: Grenade</b>
Execution	Female Suicide Bomber	Grenade
<b>Attack Type: Hanging</b>	<b>Attack Type: Helicopter</b>	<b>Attack Type: Landmine</b>
Hanging	Helicopter Crash (if hostile)	Landmine
<b>Attack Type: Missile</b>	<b>Attack Type: Mortar</b>	<b>Attack Type: Rocket</b>
Missile	Indirect	Rocket
<b>Attack Type: RPG</b>	<b>Attack Type: Sniper</b>	<b>Attack Type: Suicide IED</b>
RPG	Sniper	Suicide IED
<b>Attack Type: Torture</b>	<b>Attack Type: Unknown</b>	<b>Attack Type: VBIED</b>
Where known	Unknown	VBIED

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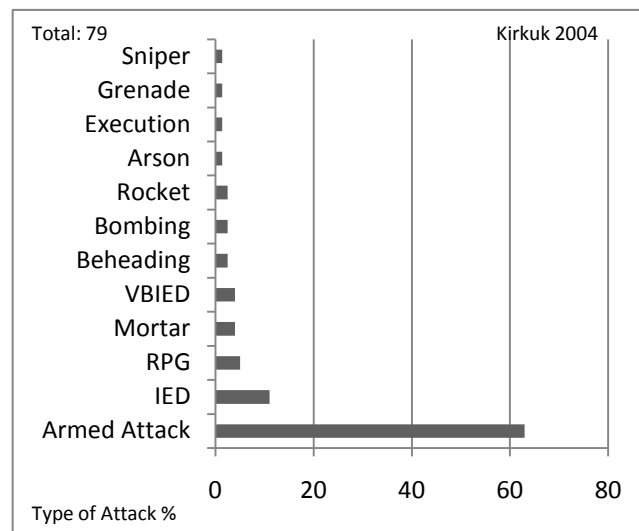
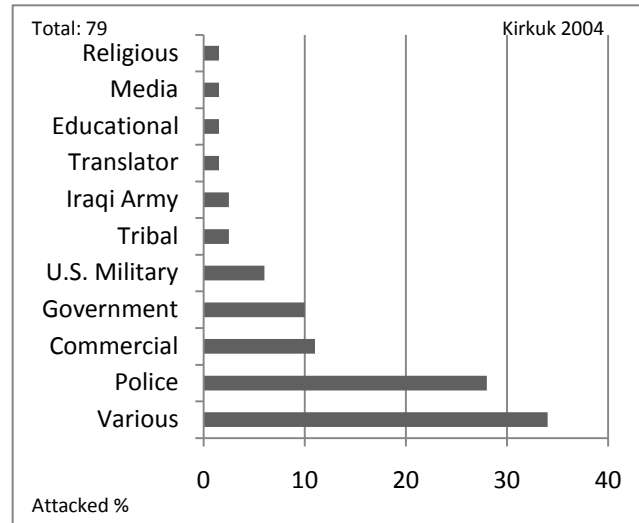
<sup>1248</sup> The Iraqi insurgency varied its attack methods and targets in response to changes in the environment and to the efforts of the counterinsurgency. These attacks were in many cases exotic and differed in their degree of violence, power, and method. Some of the methods used include: coordinated triple IED attack; coordinated single type attack; coordinated multiple method ambush; fuel tanker VBIED; bicycle bombing; Katyusha rockets; minibus and minivan VBIED, dump-truck IED; motorcycle VBIED; push cart bombing; female suicide bombing and; wheelchair suicide bombing.

## B.4 ATTACKS IN AL TAMIN PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008

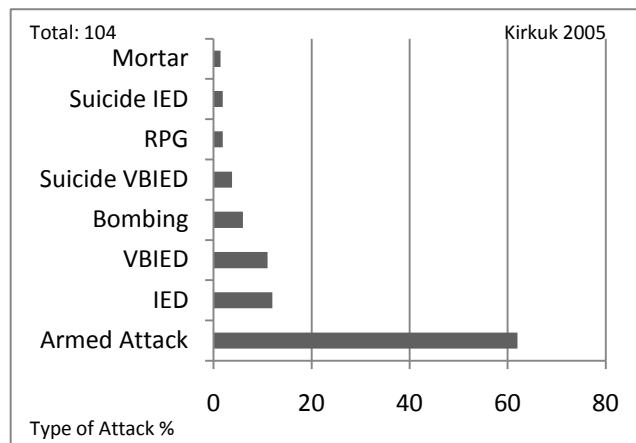
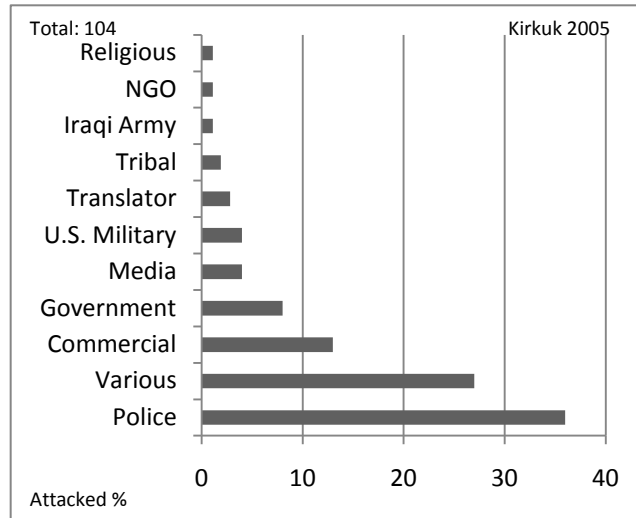
**Table 6.** Attacks in and near Kirkuk, Al Tamin Province, Iraq, 2003



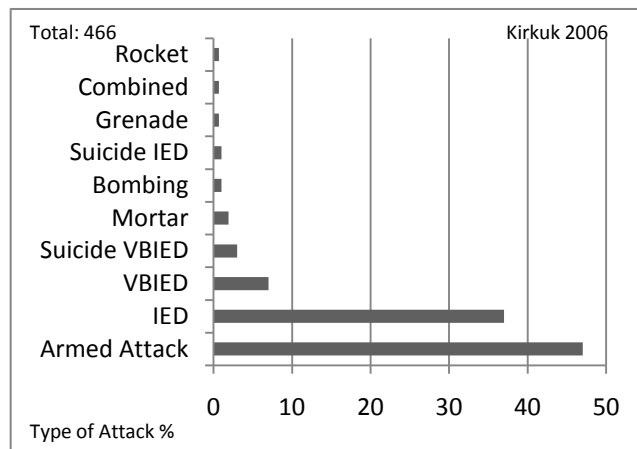
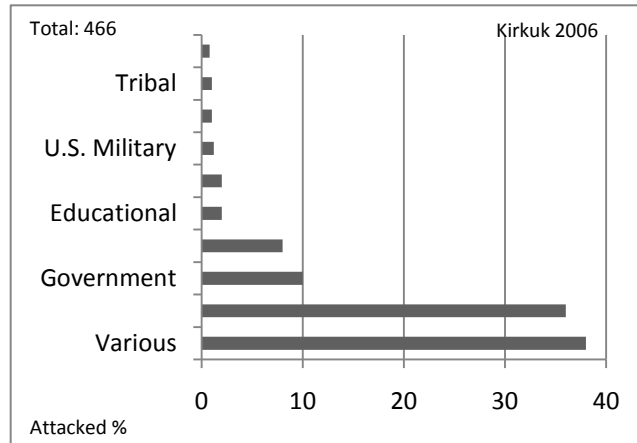
**Table 7.** Attacks in and near Kirkuk, Al Tamin Province, Iraq, 2004



**Table 8.** Attacks in and near Kirkuk, Al Tamin Province, Iraq, 2005

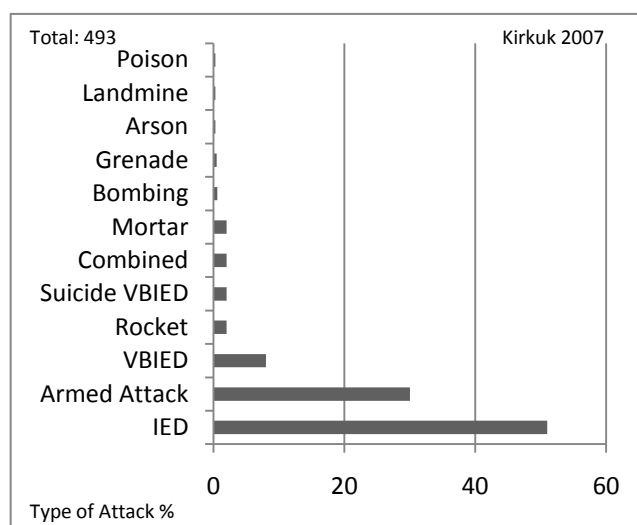
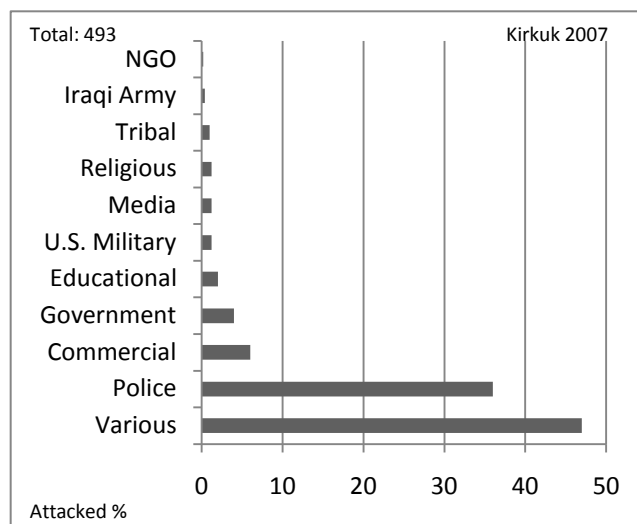


**Table 9.** Attacks in and near Kirkuk, Al Tamin Province, Iraq, 2006

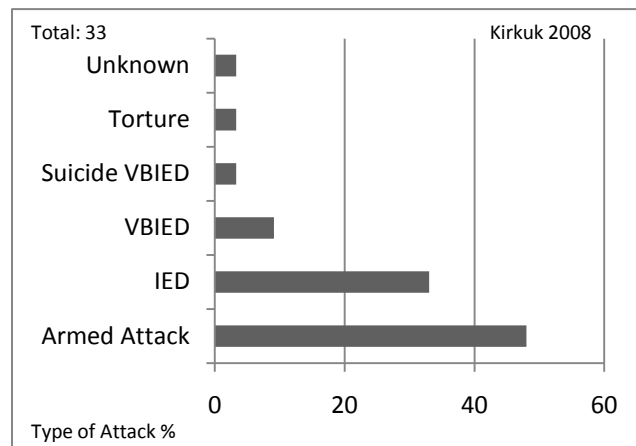
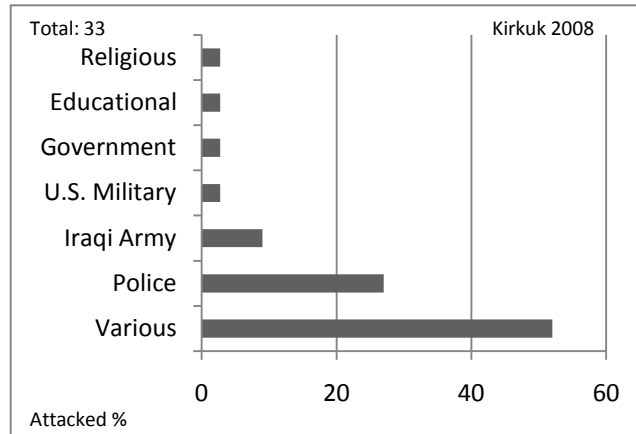




**Table 10.** Attacks in and near Kirkuk, Al Tamin Province, Iraq, 2007

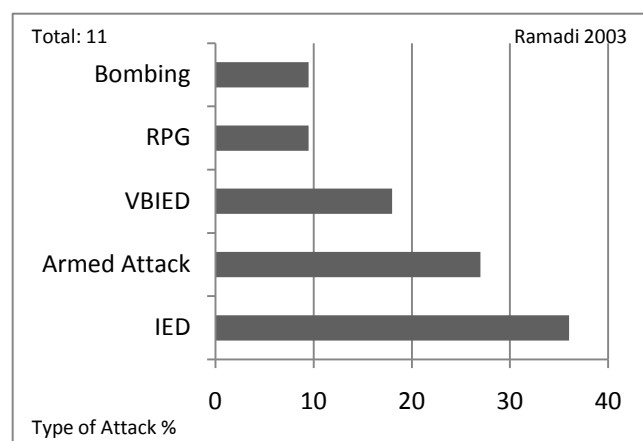
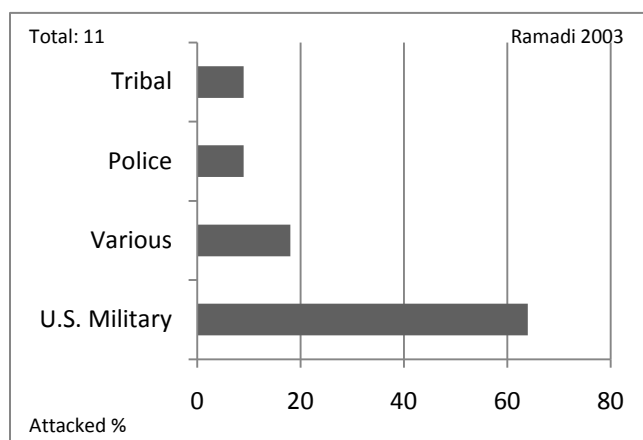


**Table 11.** Attacks in and near Kirkuk, Al Tamin Province, Iraq, through mid-2008

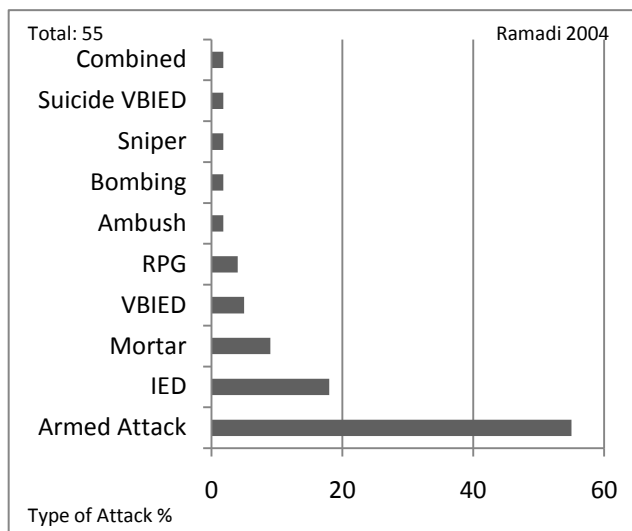
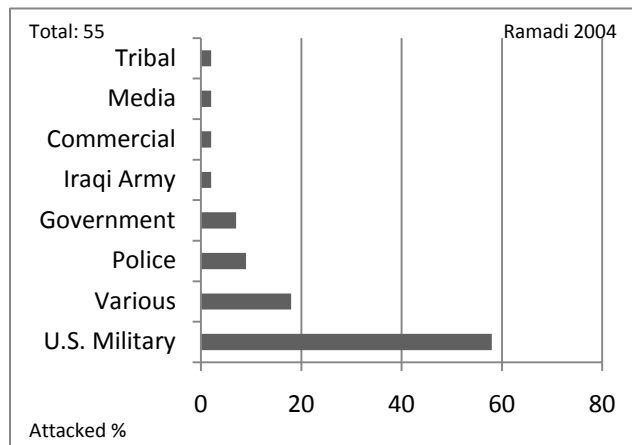


## B.5 ATTACKS IN ANBAR PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008

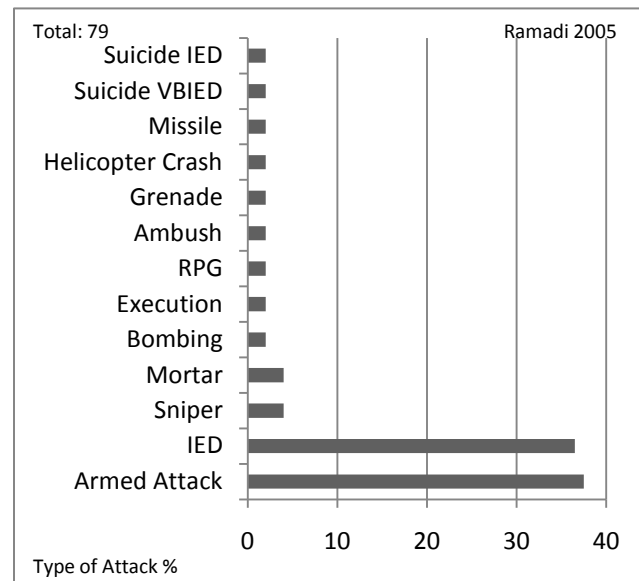
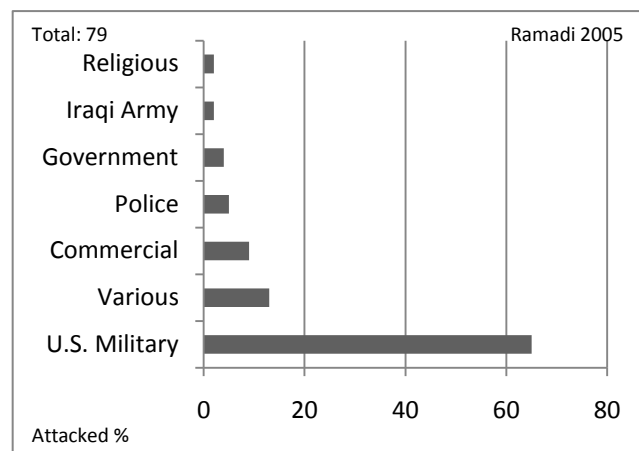
**Table 12.** Attacks in and near Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2003



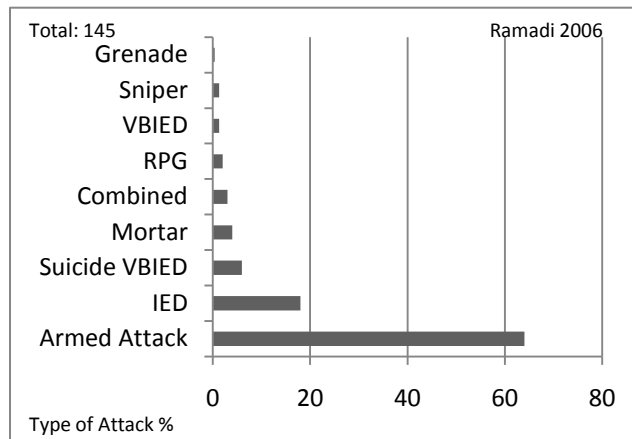
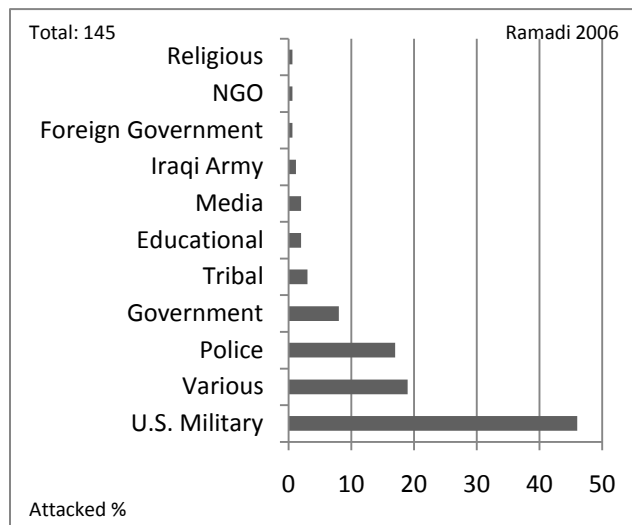
**Table 13.** Attacks in and near Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2004



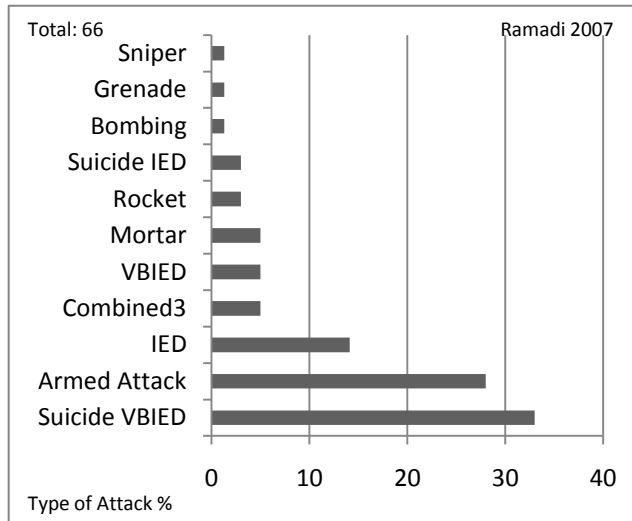
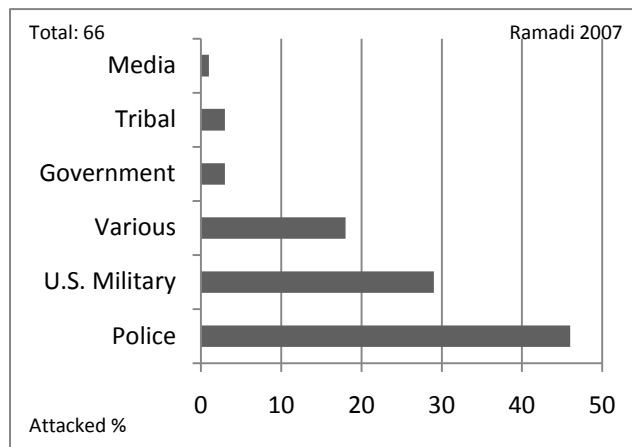
**Table 14.** Attacks in and near Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2005



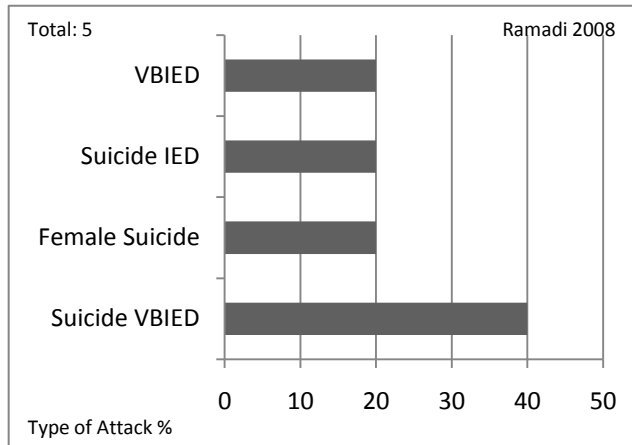
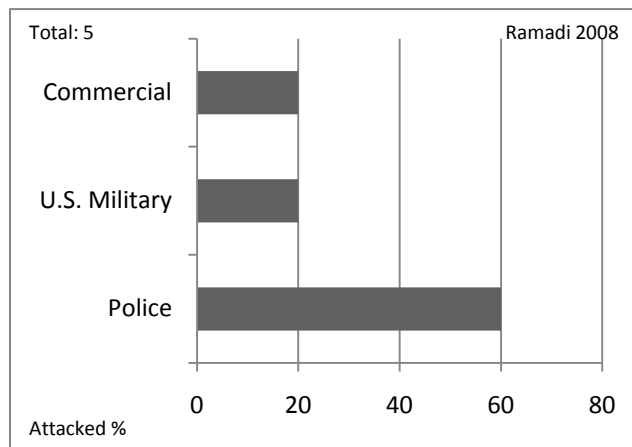
**Table 15.** Attacks in and near Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2006



**Table 16.** Attacks in and near Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2007

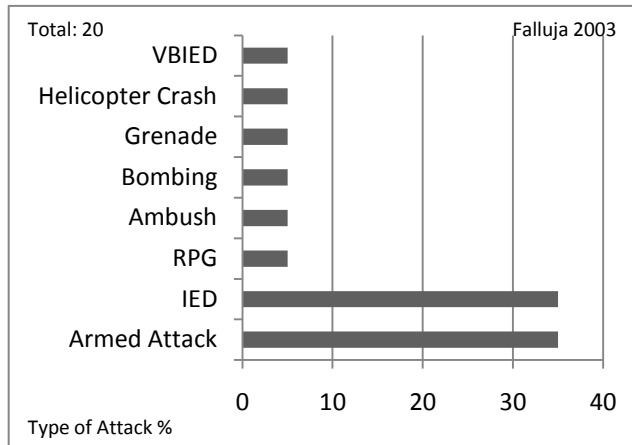
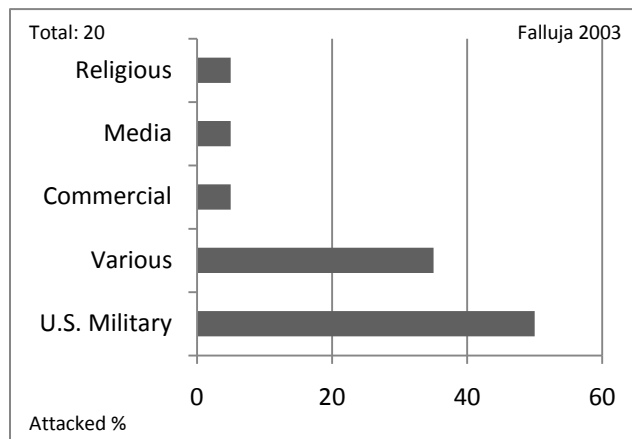


**Table 17.** Attacks in and near Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, through mid-2008

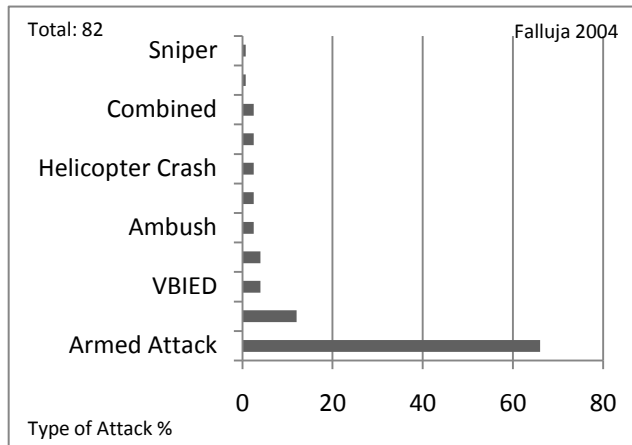
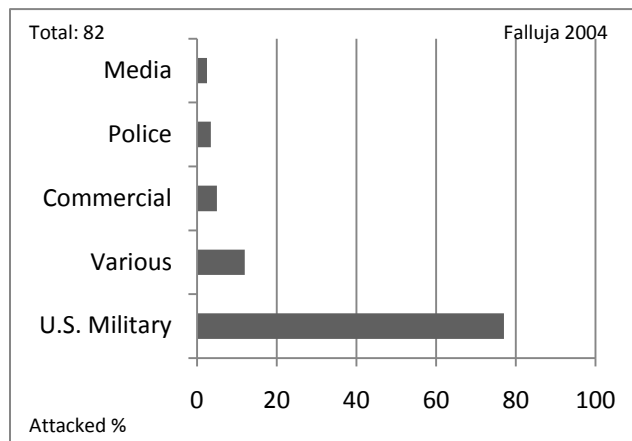




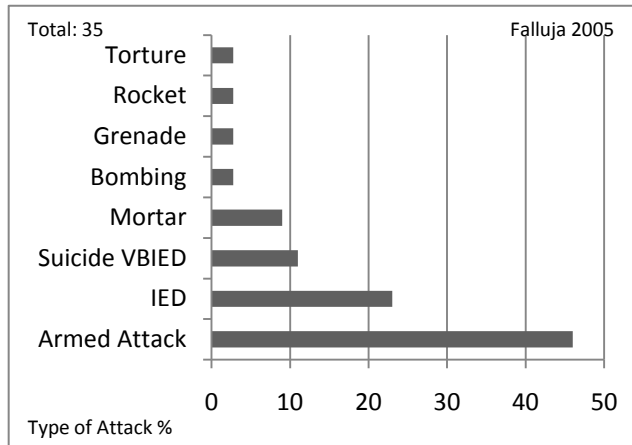
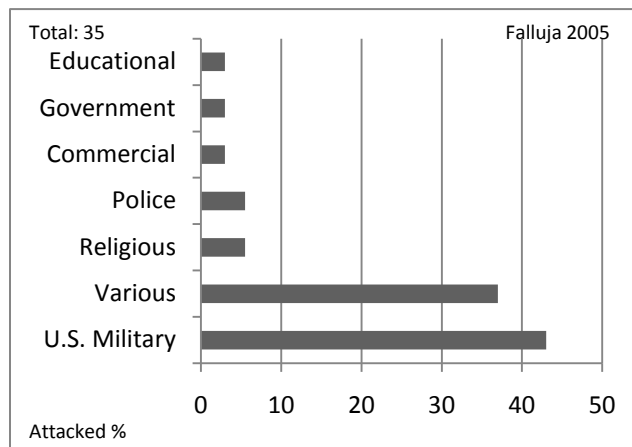
**Table 18.** Attacks in and near Falluja, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2003



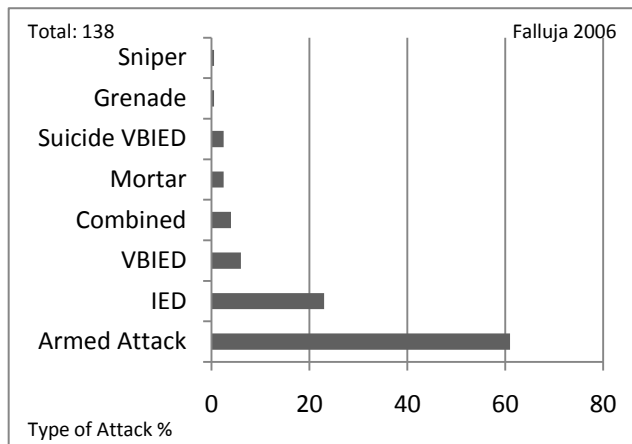
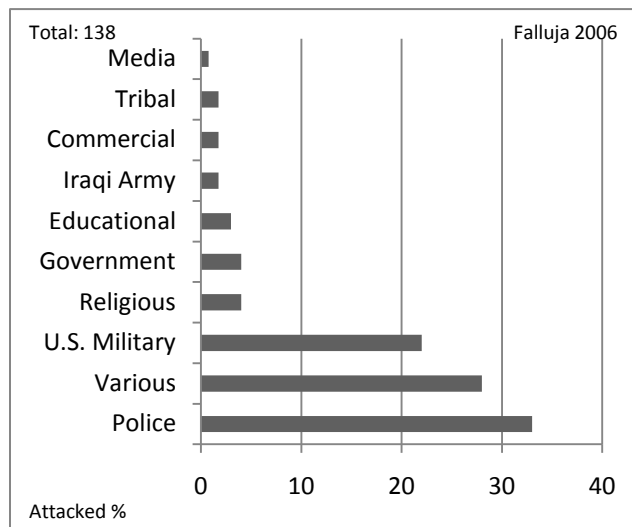
**Table 19.** Attacks in and near Falluja, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2004



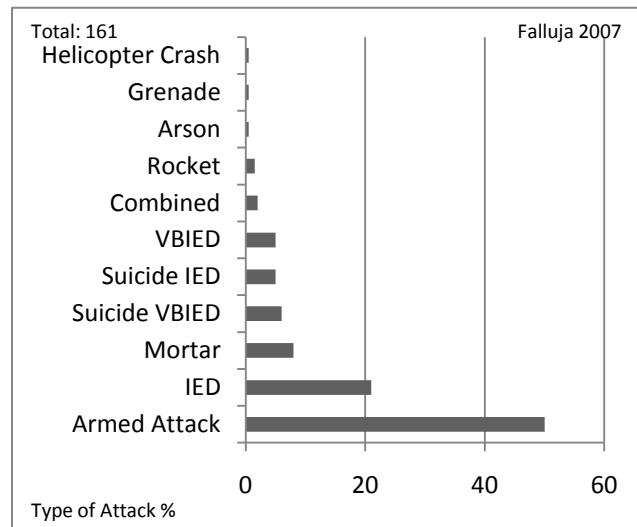
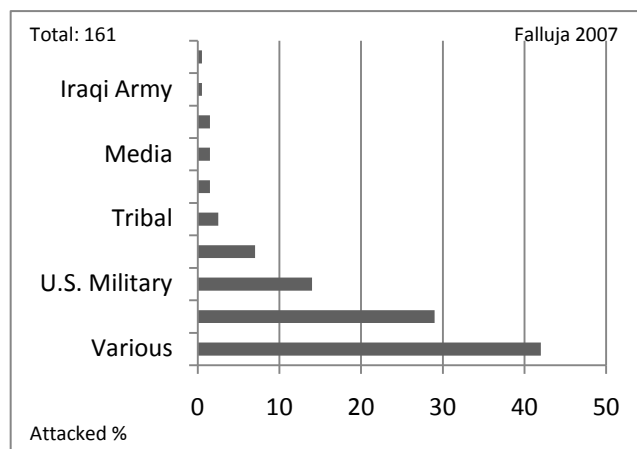
**Table 20.** Attacks in and near Falluja, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2005



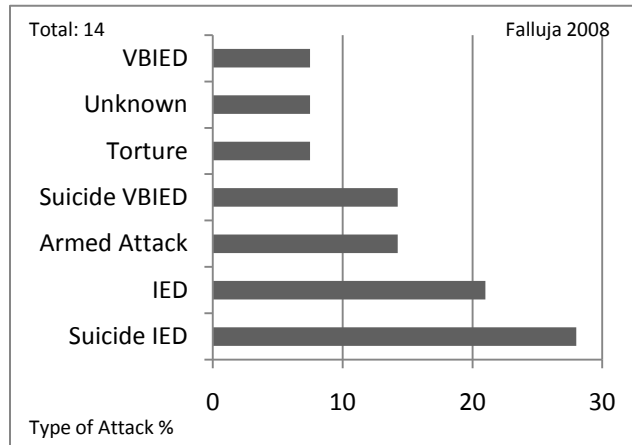
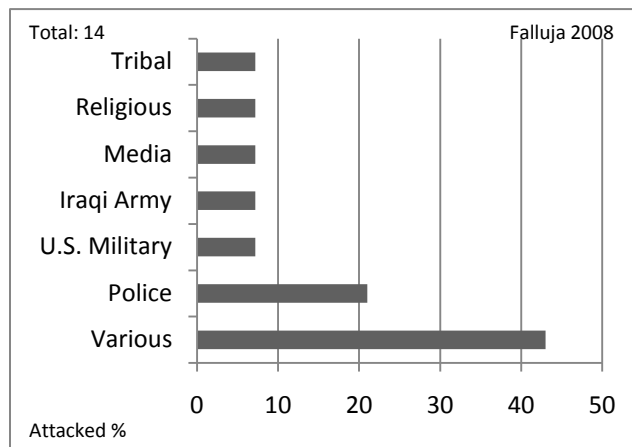
**Table 21.** Attacks in and near Falluja, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2006



**Table 22.** Attacks in and near Falluja, Anbar Province, Iraq, 2007

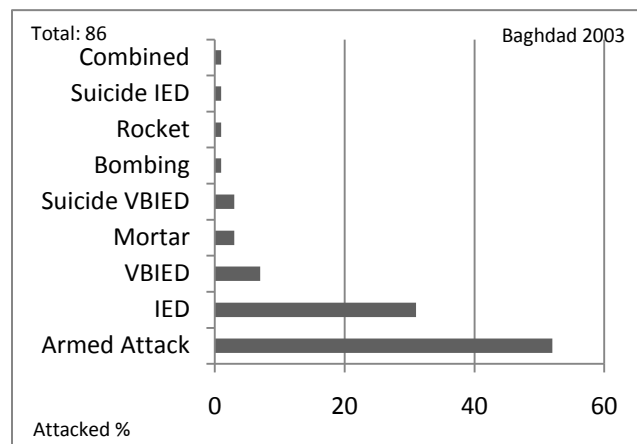
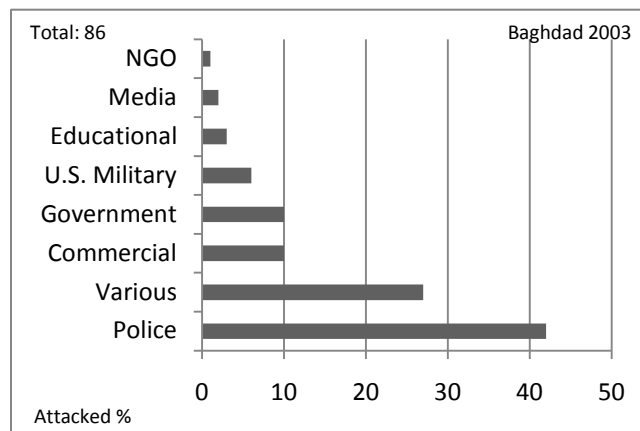


**Table 23.** Attacks in and near Falluja, Anbar Province, Iraq, through mid-2008



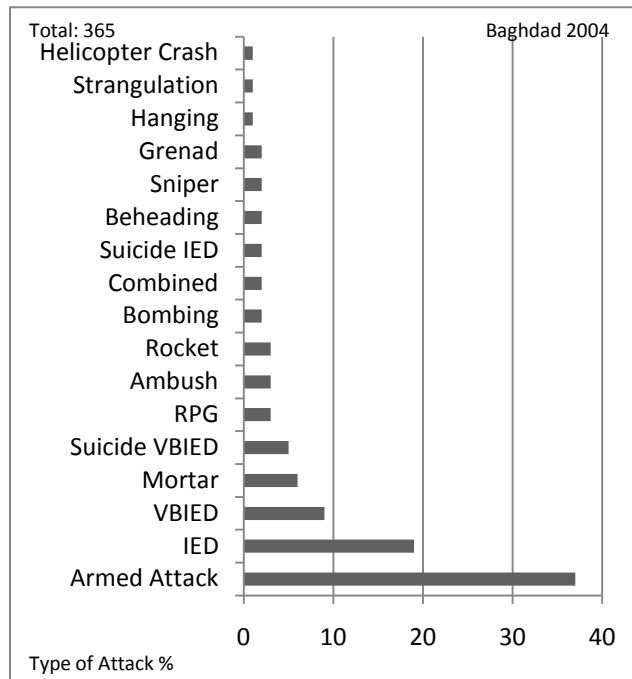
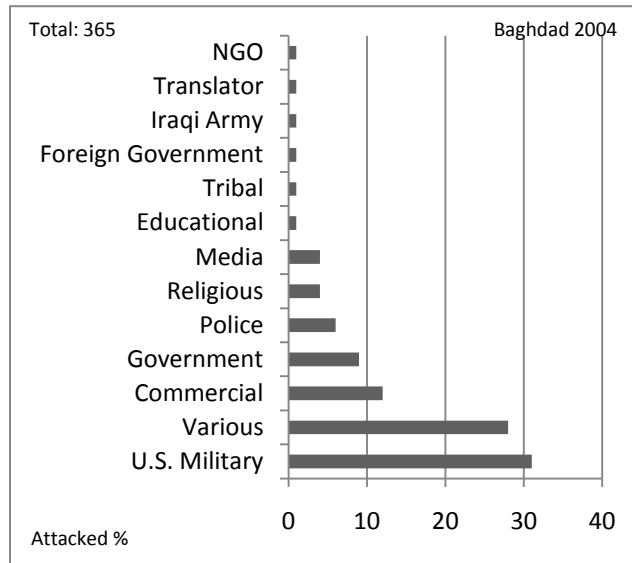
## B.6 ATTACKS IN BAGHDAD PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008

**Table 24.** Attacks in and near Baghdad, Baghdad Province, Iraq, 2003

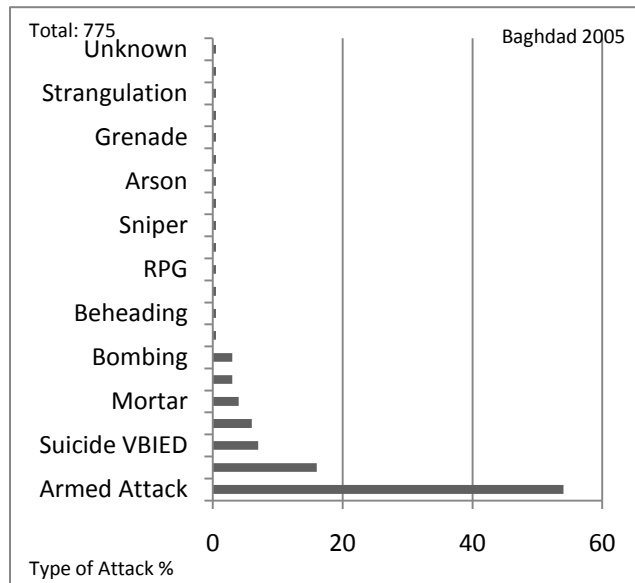
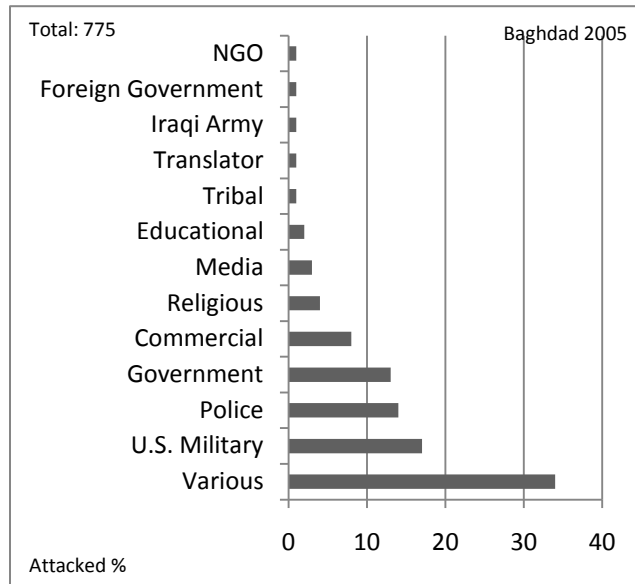


**Table 25.** Attacks in and near Baghdad, Baghdad Province, Iraq, 2004

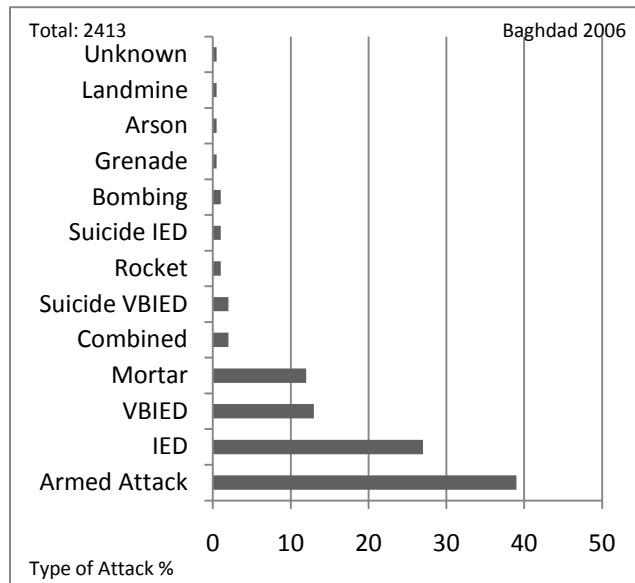
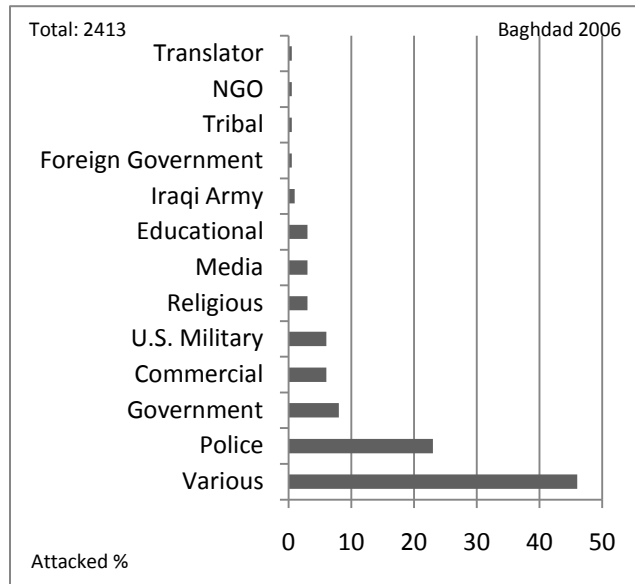




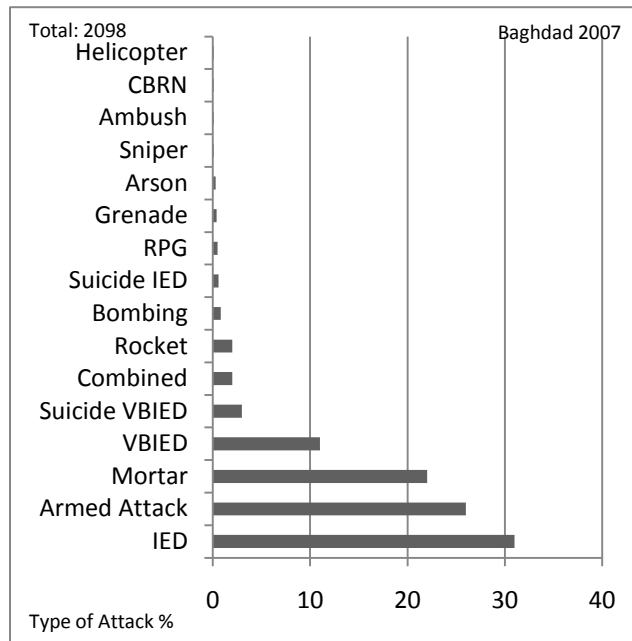
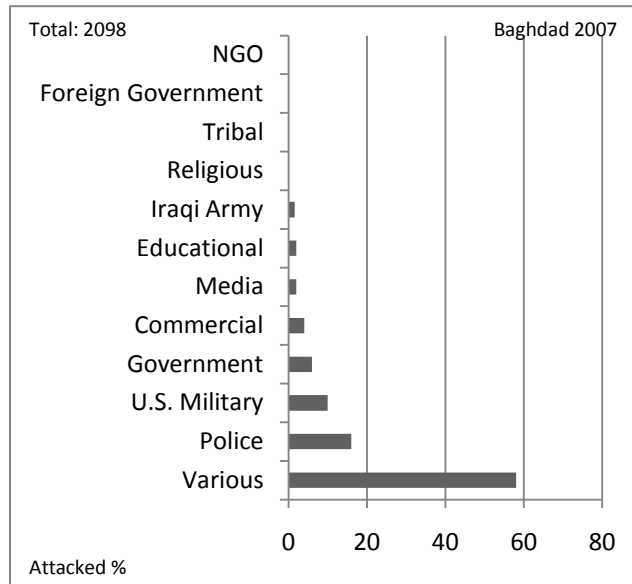
**Table 26.** Attacks in and near Baghdad, Baghdad Province, Iraq, 2005



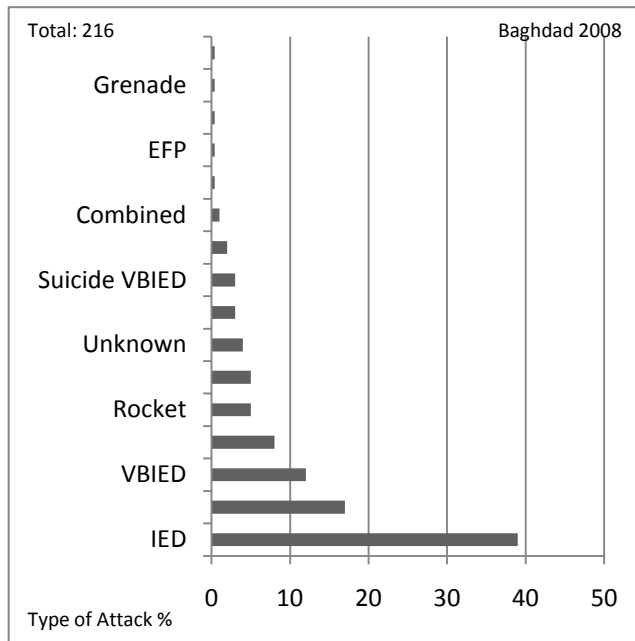
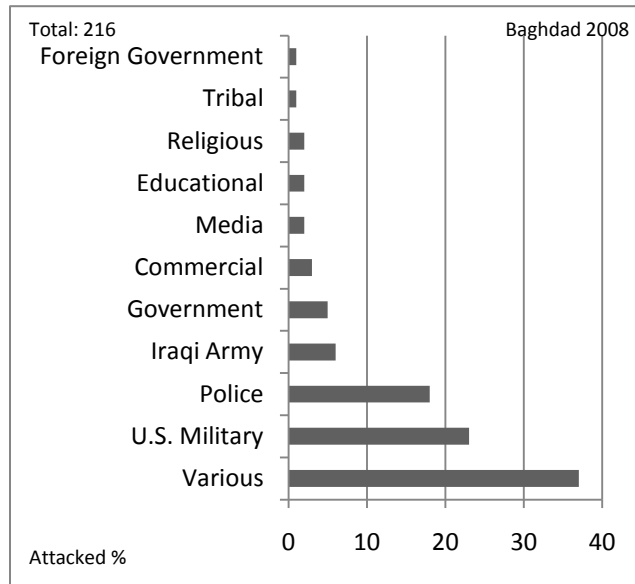
**Table 27.** Attacks in and near Baghdad, Baghdad Province, Iraq, 2006



**Table 28.** Attacks in and near Baghdad, Baghdad Province, Iraq, 2007

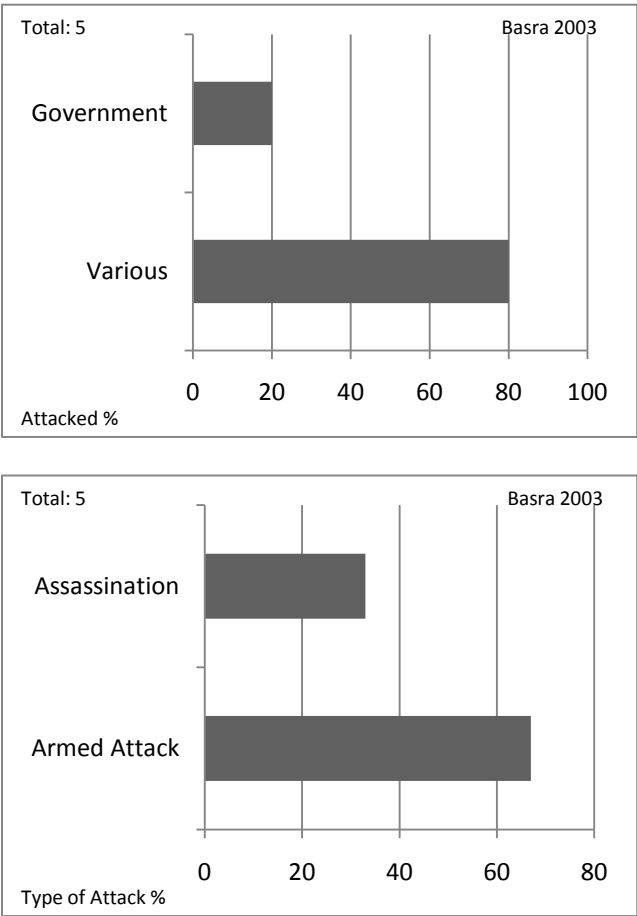


**Table 29.** Attacks in and near Baghdad, Baghdad Province, Iraq, through mid-2008

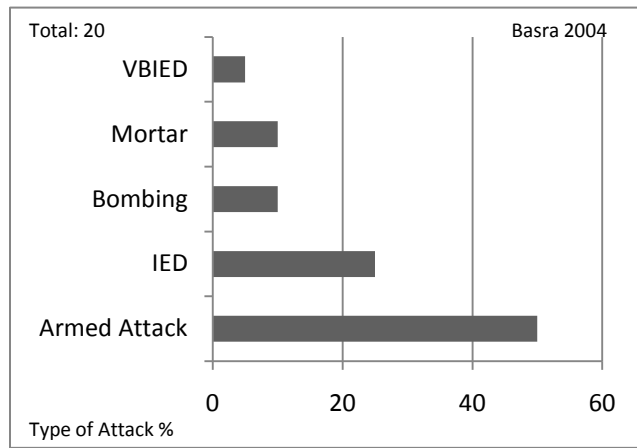
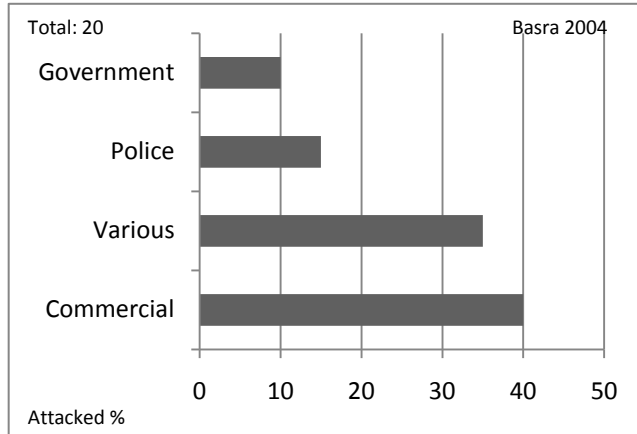


**B.7     ATTACKS IN BASRA PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008**

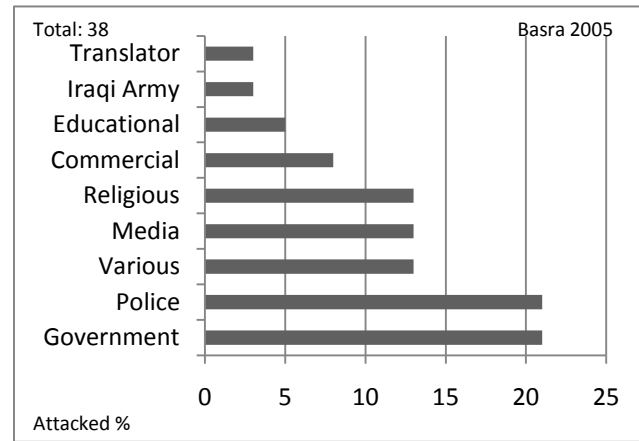
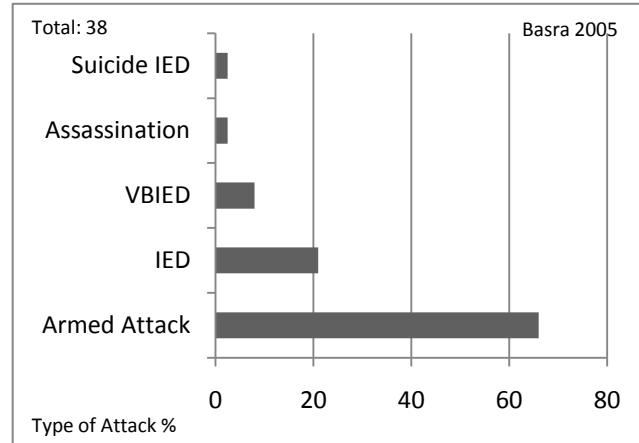
**Table 30.** Attacks in and near Basra, Basra Province, Iraq, 2003



**Table 31.** Attacks in and near Basra, Basra Province, Iraq, 2004

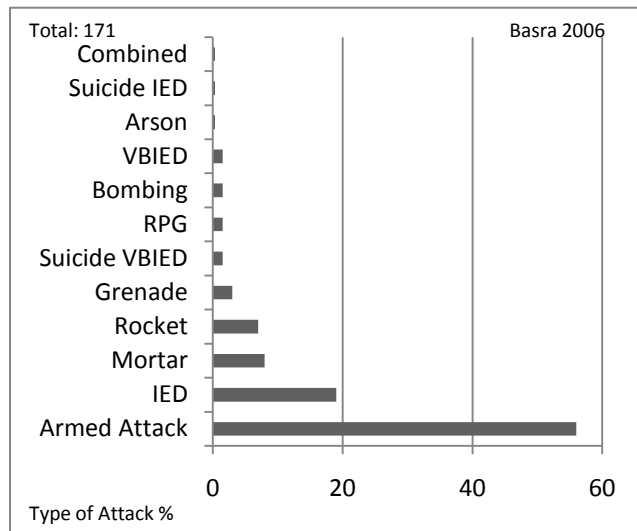
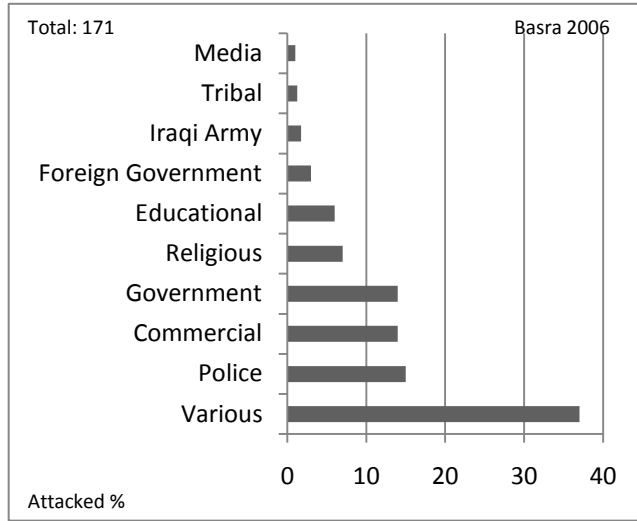


**Table 32.** Attacks in and near Basra, Basra Province, Iraq, 2005

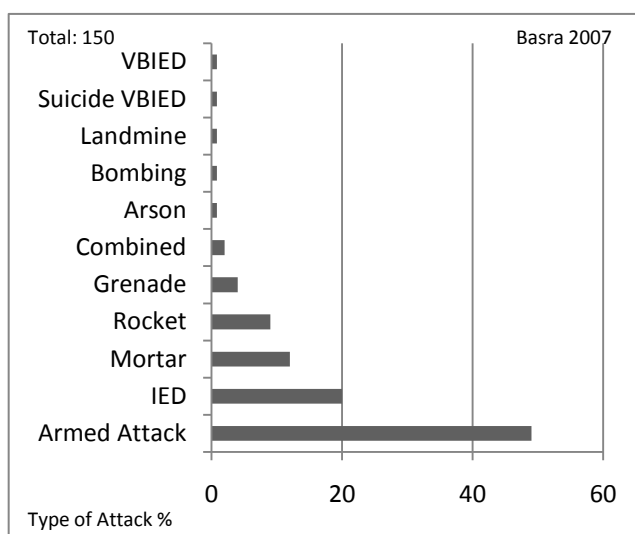
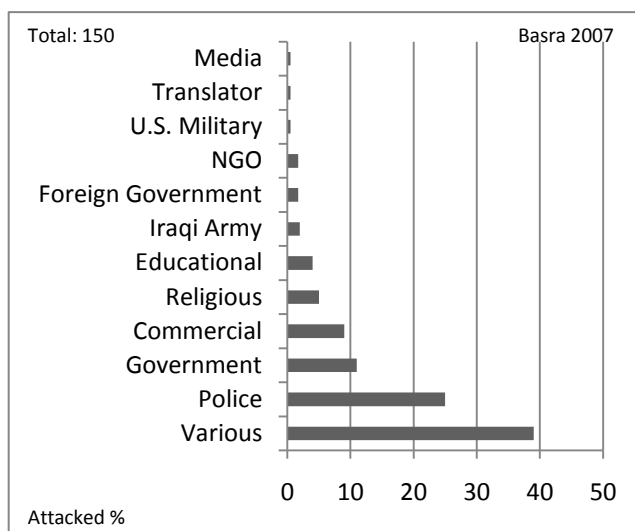


**Table 33.** Attacks in and near Basra, Basra Province, Iraq, 2006

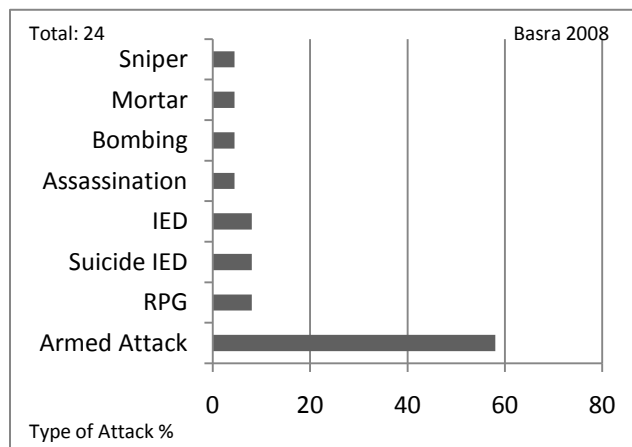
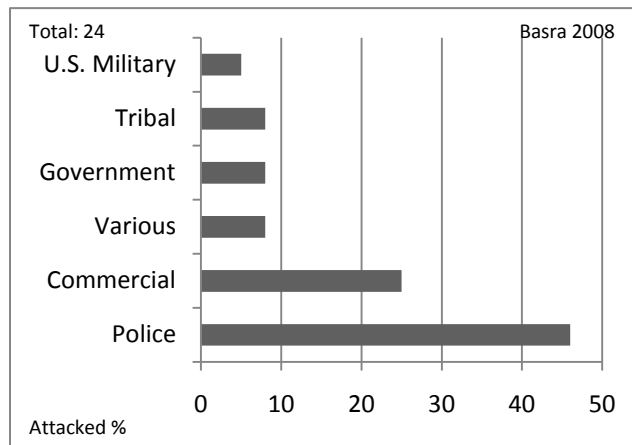




**Table 34.** Attacks in and near Basra, Basra Province, Iraq, 2007

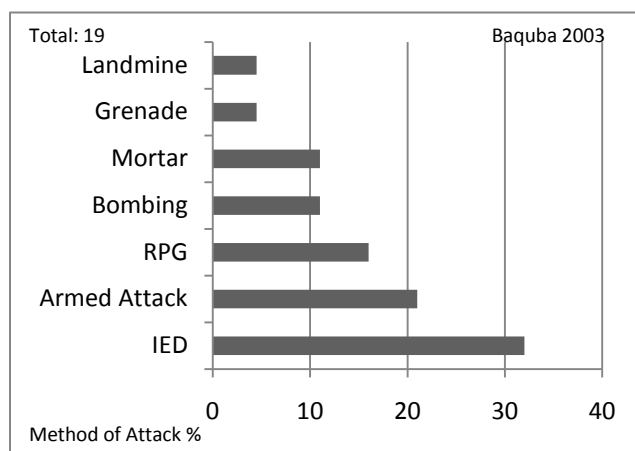
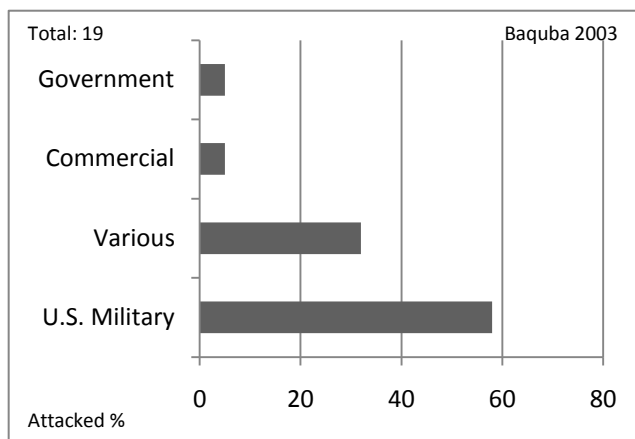


**Table 35.** Attacks in and near Basra, Basra Province, Iraq, through mid-2008

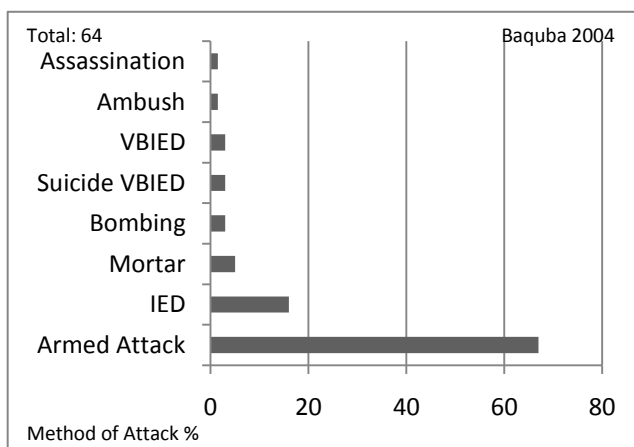
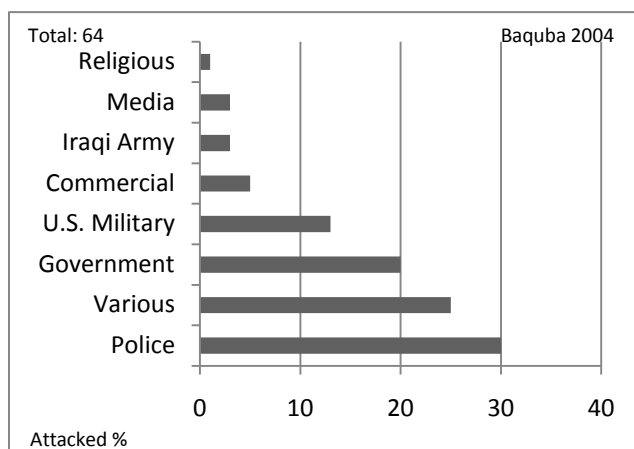


## B.8 ATTACKS IN DIYALA PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008

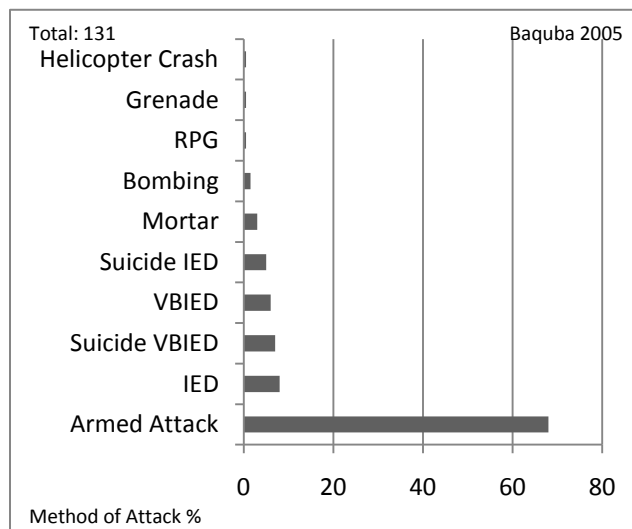
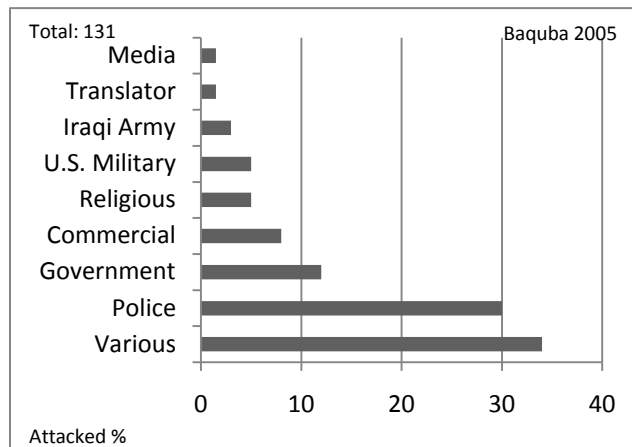
**Table 36.** Attacks in and near Baquba, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2003



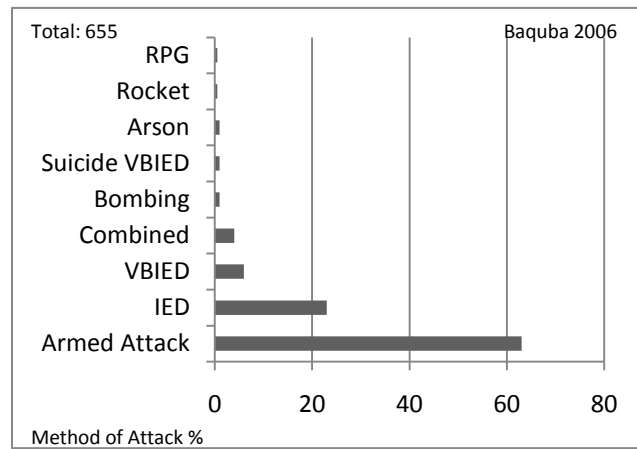
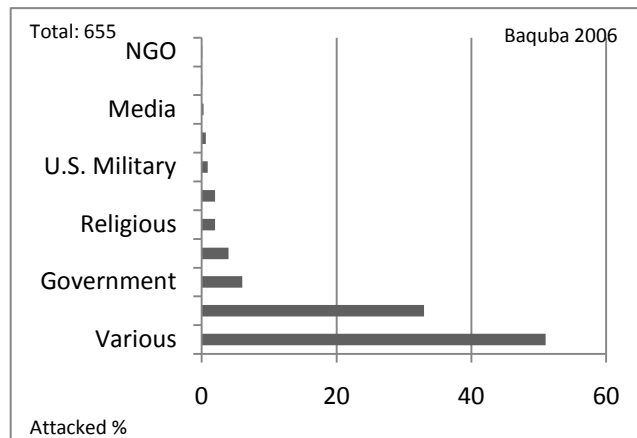
**Table 37.** Attacks in and near Baquba, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2004



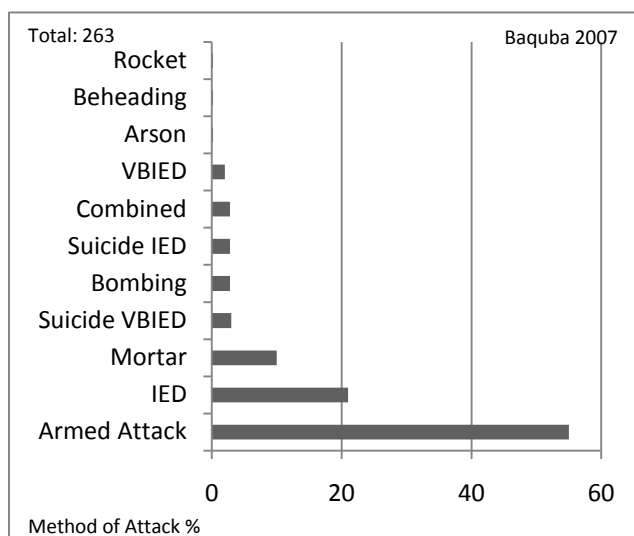
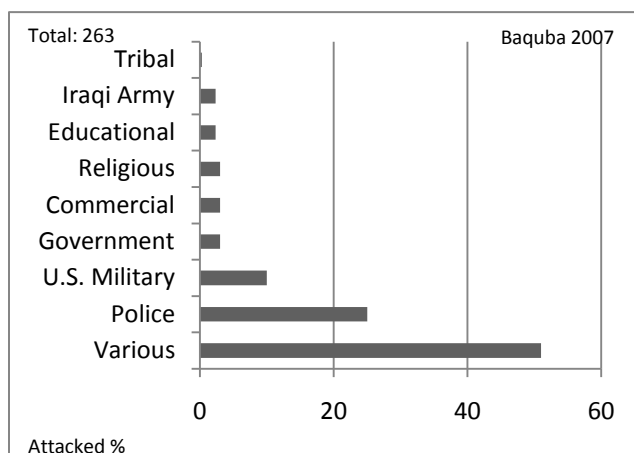
**Table 38.** Attacks in and near Baquba, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2005



**Table 39.** Attacks in and near Baquba, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2006

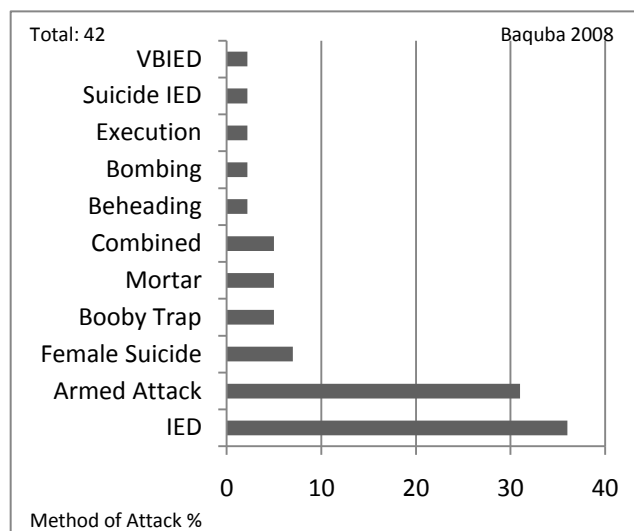
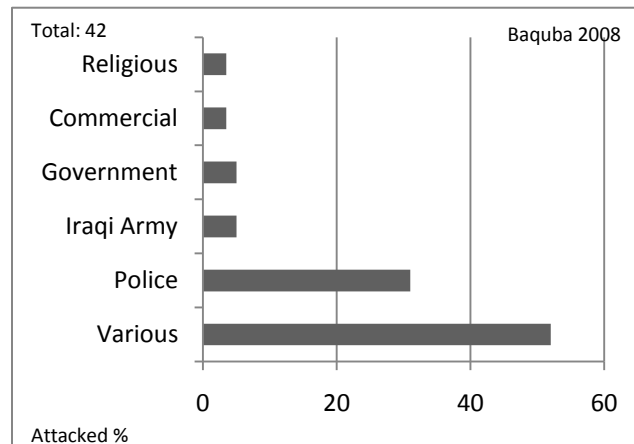


**Table 40.** Attacks in and near Baquba, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2007

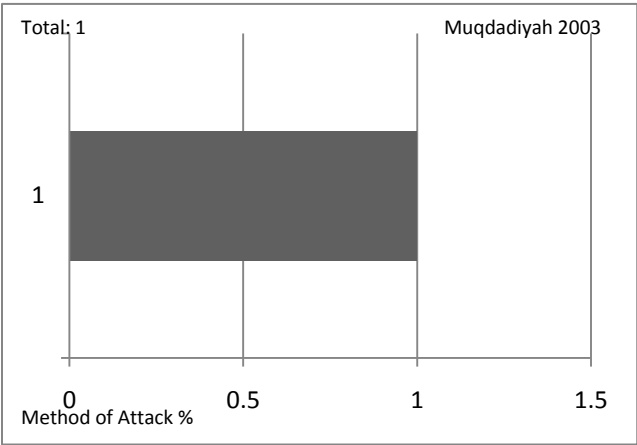
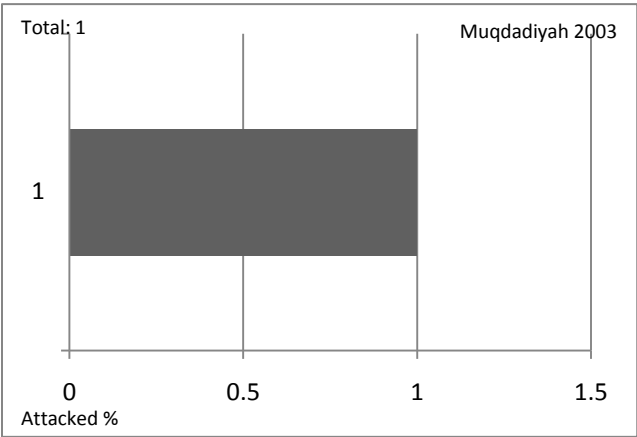




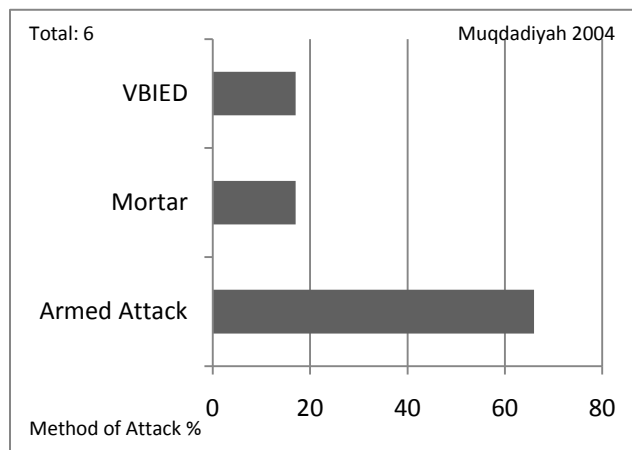
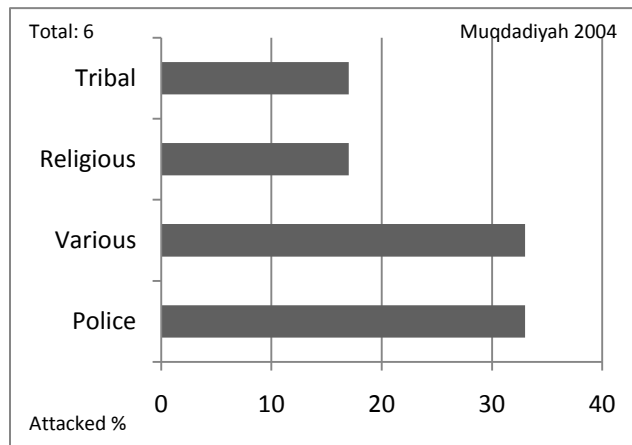
**Table 41.** Attacks in and near Baquba, Diyala Province, Iraq, through mid-2008



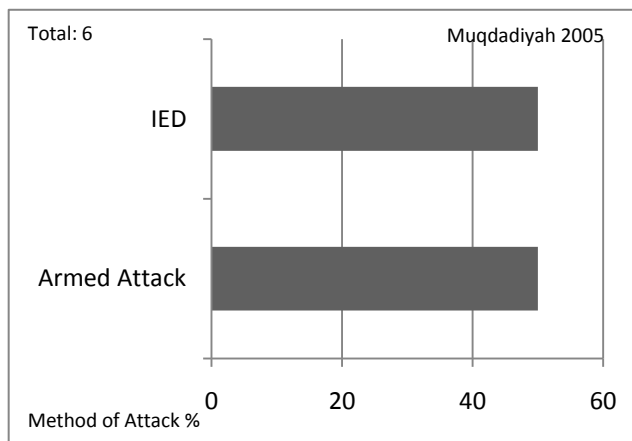
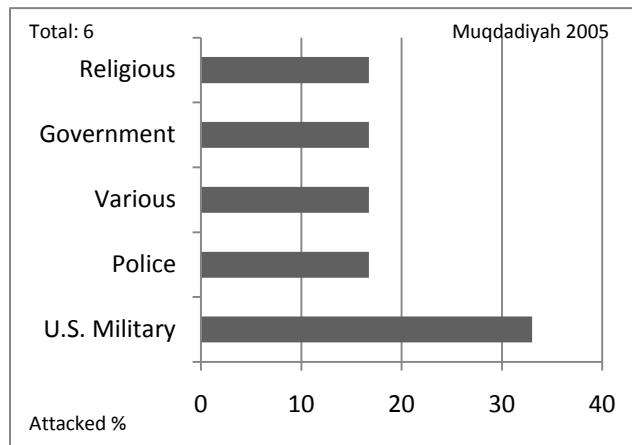
**Table 42.** Attacks in and near Muqdadiyah, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2003



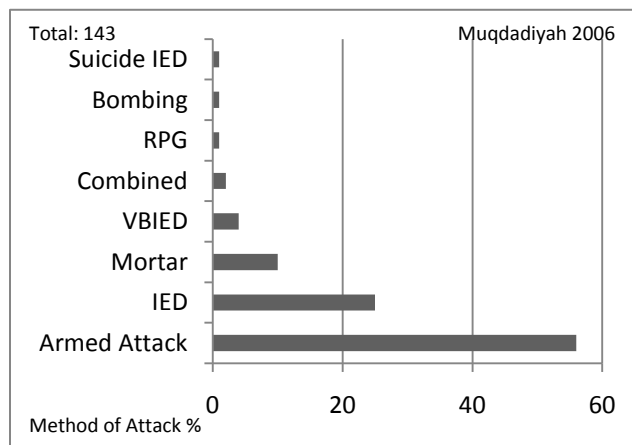
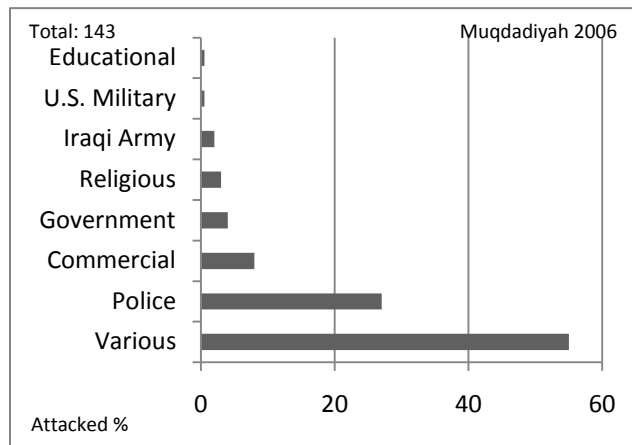
**Table 43.** Attacks in and near Muqdadiyah, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2004



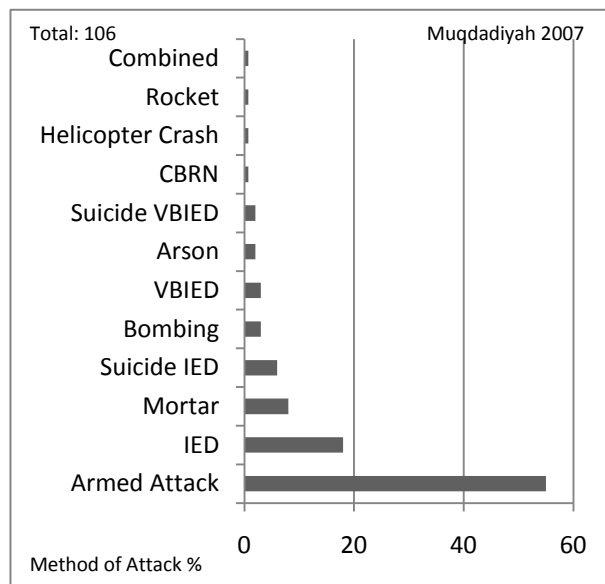
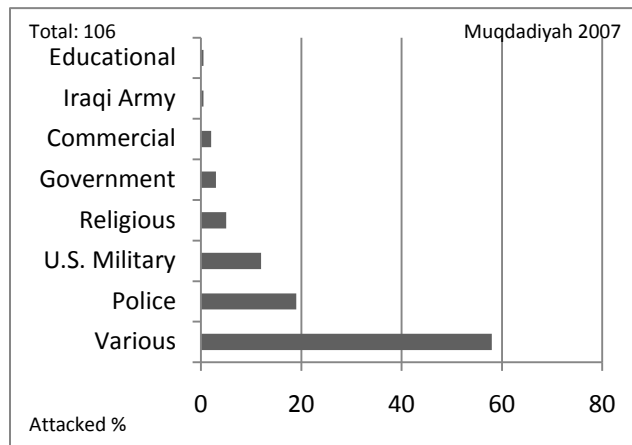
**Table 44.** Attacks in and near Muqdadiyah, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2005



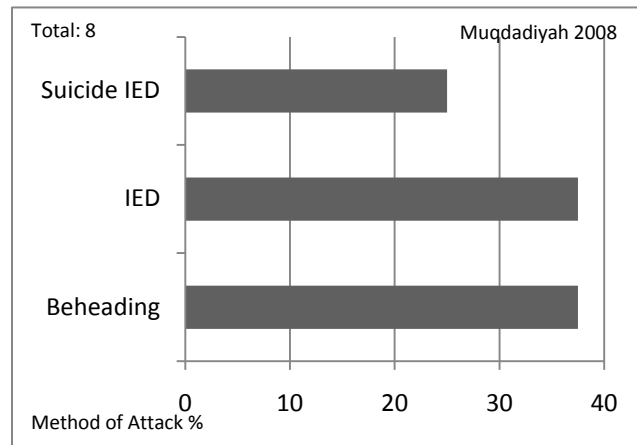
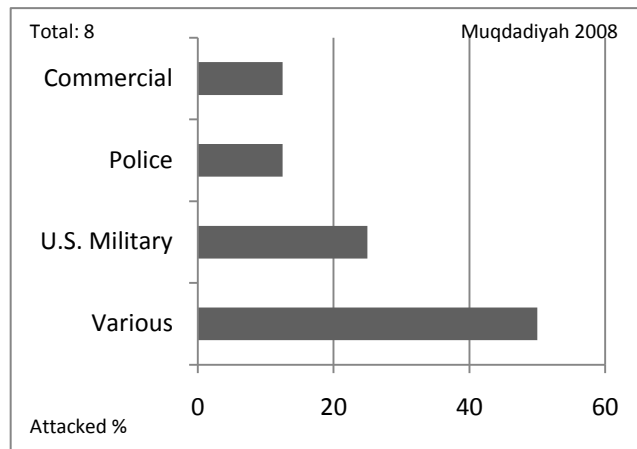
**Table 45.** Attacks in and near Muqdadiyah, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2006



**Table 46.** Attacks in and near Muqdadiyah, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2007

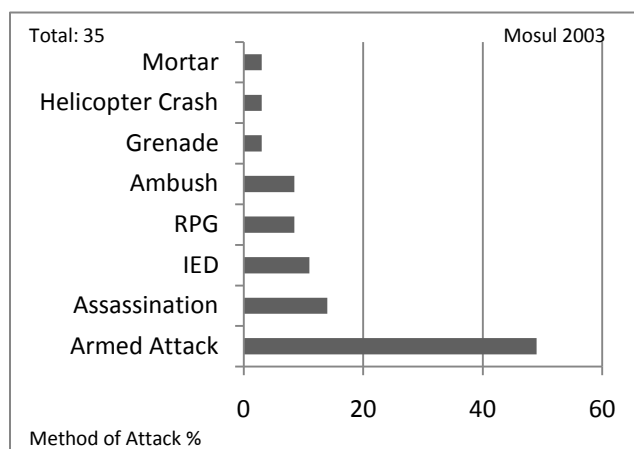
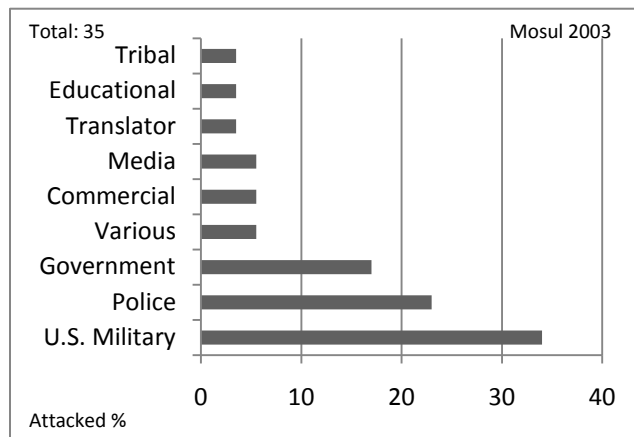


**Table 47.** Attacks in and near Muqdadiyah, Diyala Province, Iraq, through mid-2008



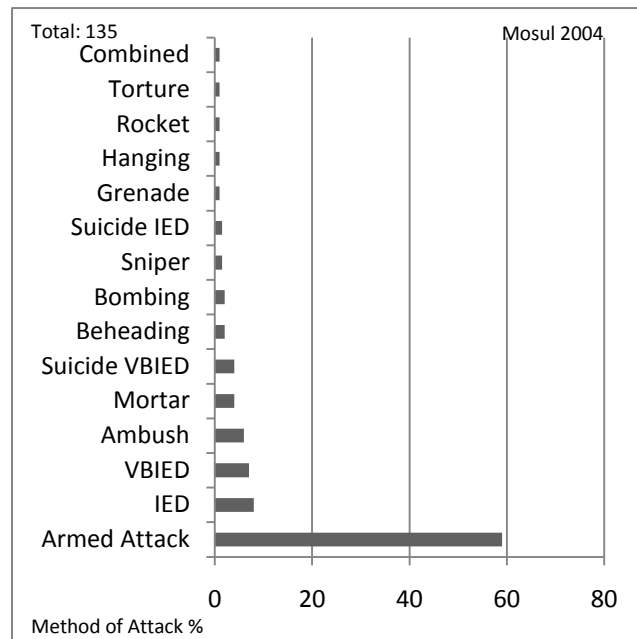
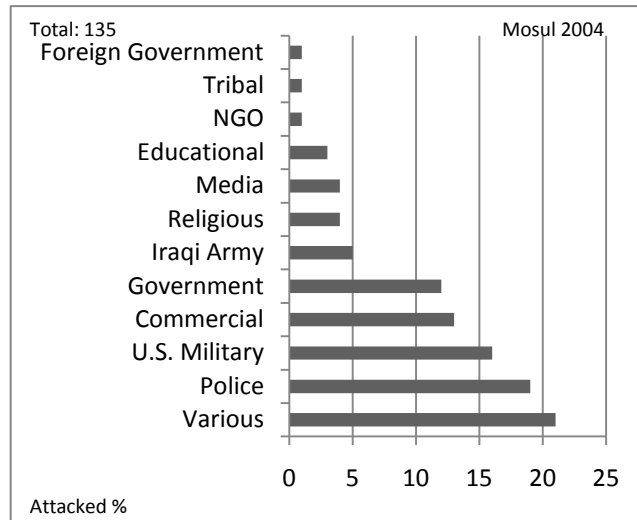
## B.9 ATTACKS IN DIYALA PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008

**Table 48.** Attacks in and near Mosul, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2003

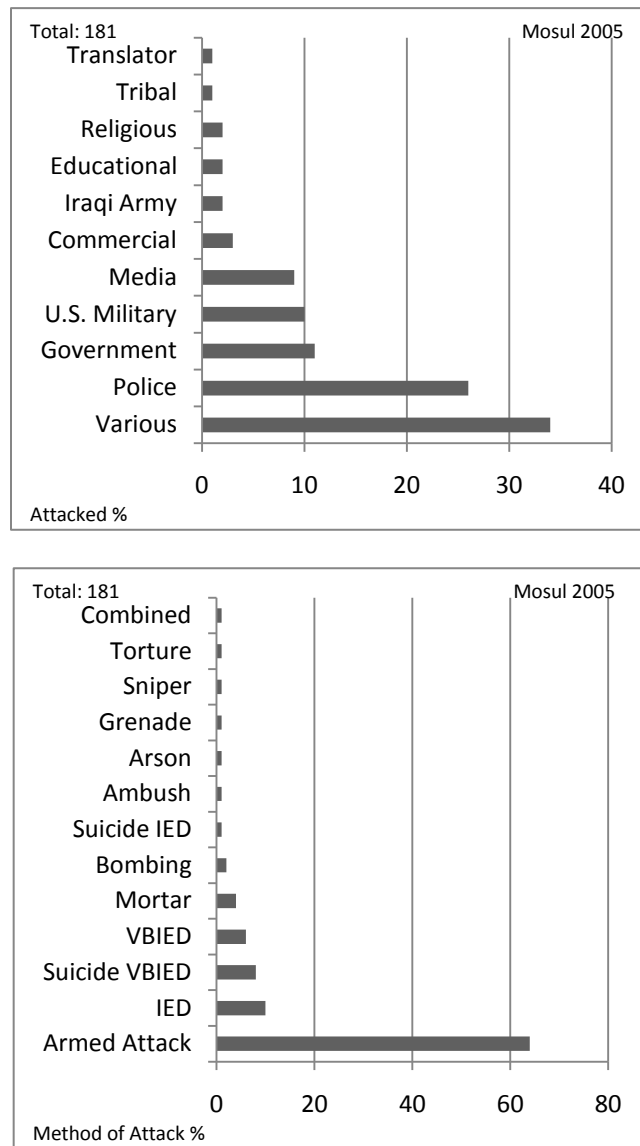




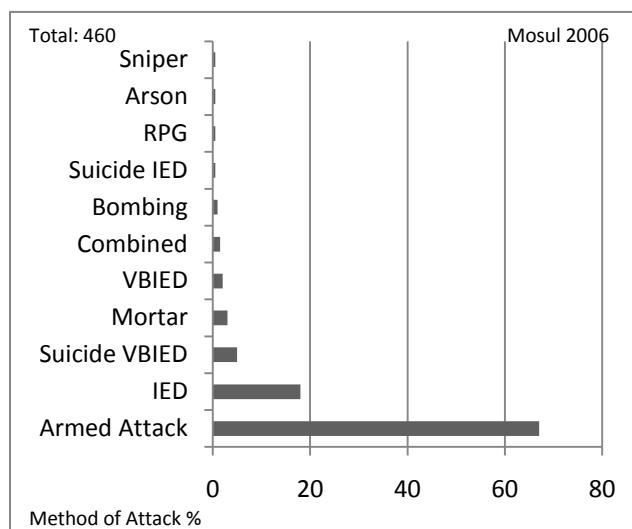
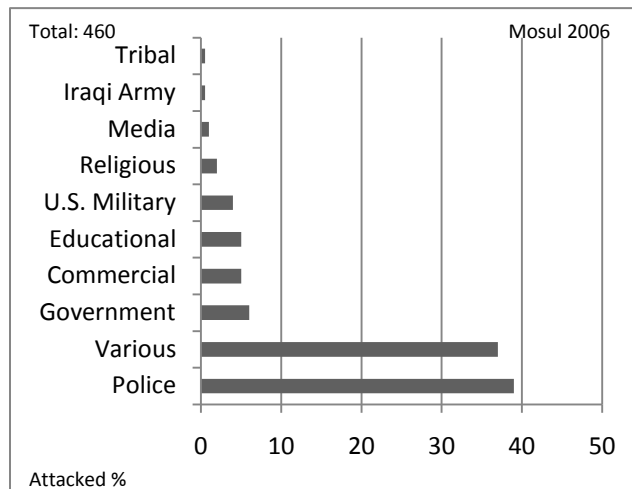
**Table 49.** Attacks in and near Mosul, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2004



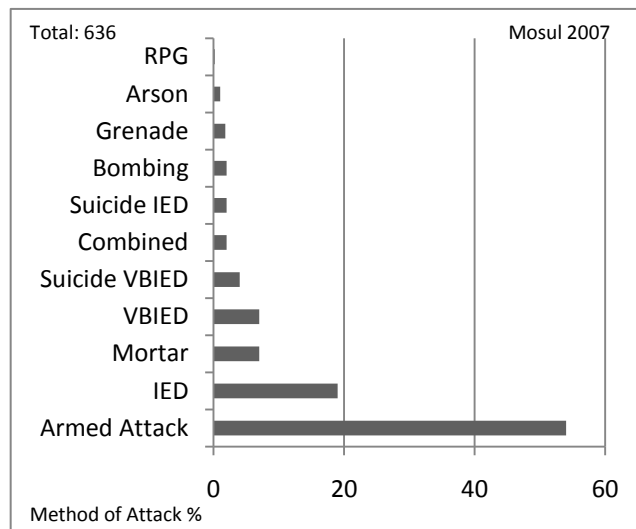
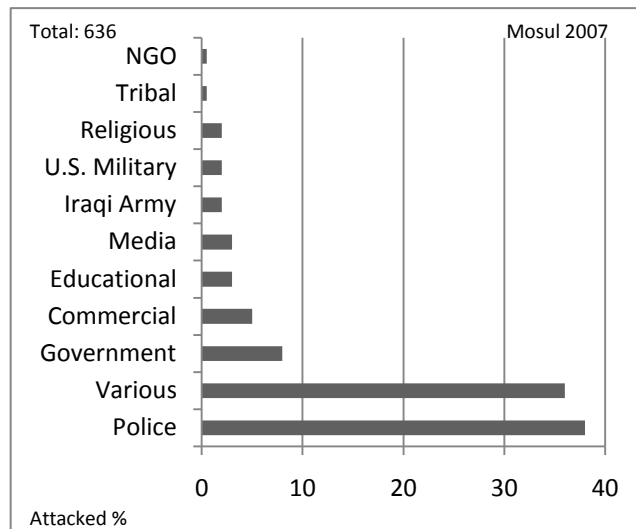
**Table 50.** Attacks in and near Mosul, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2005



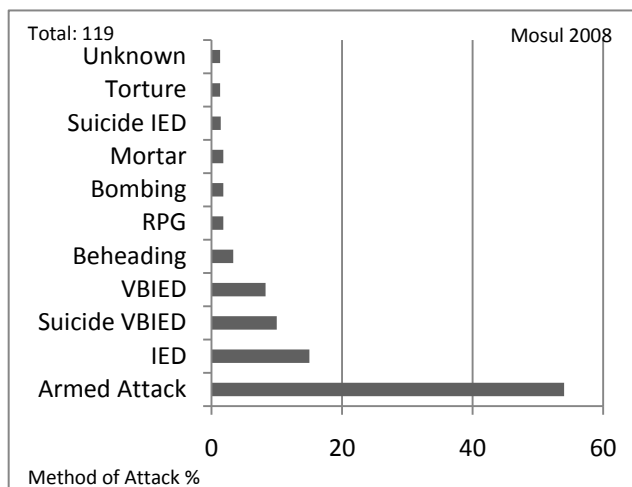
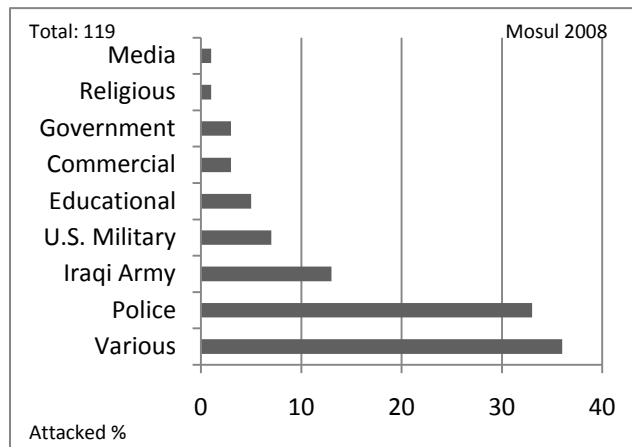
**Table 51.** Attacks in and near Mosul, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2006



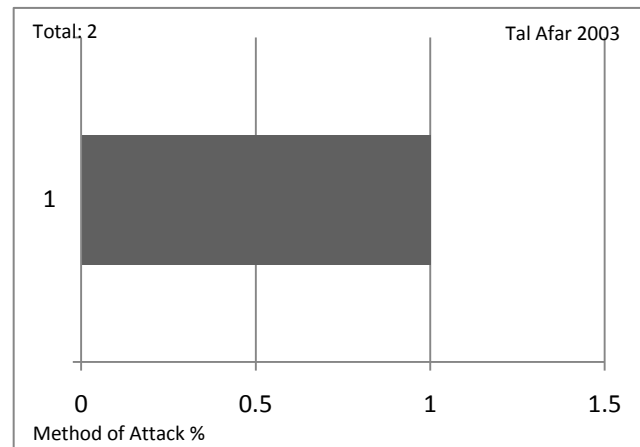
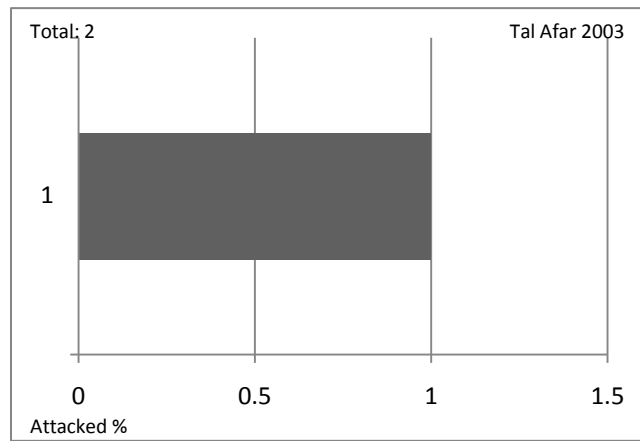
**Table 52.** Attacks in and near Mosul, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2007



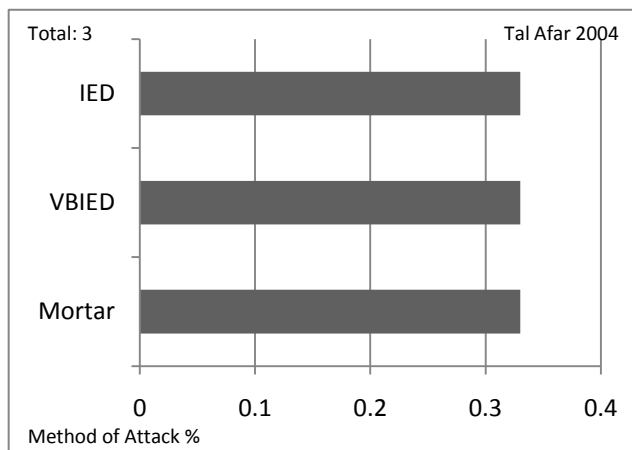
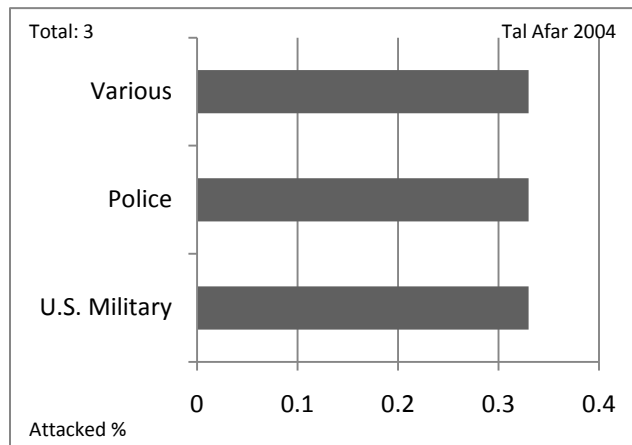
**Table 53.** Attacks in and near Mosul, Ninawa Province, Iraq, through mid-2008



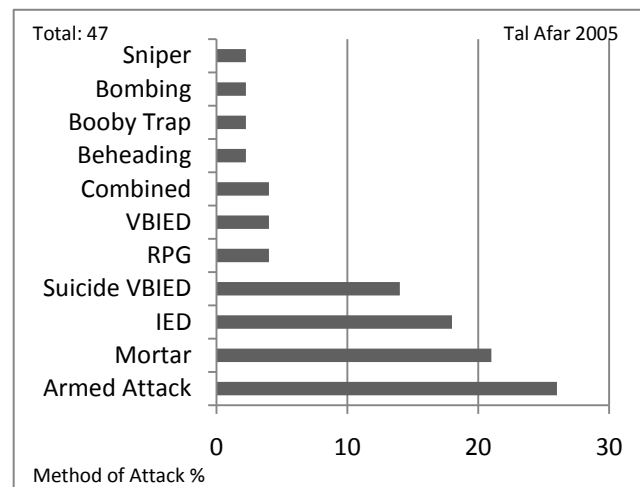
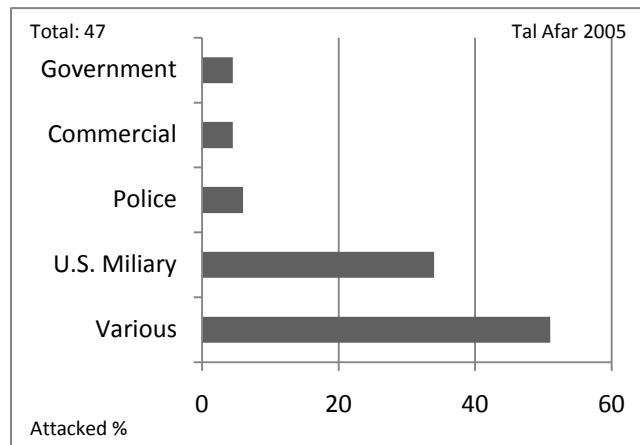
**Table 54.** Attacks in and near Tal Afar, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2003



**Table 55.** Attacks in and near Tal Afar, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2004

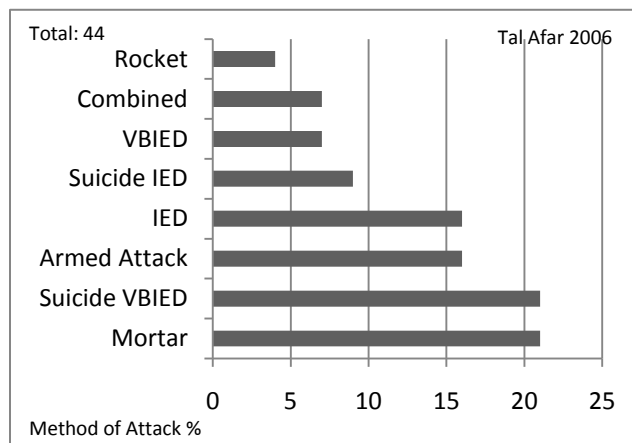
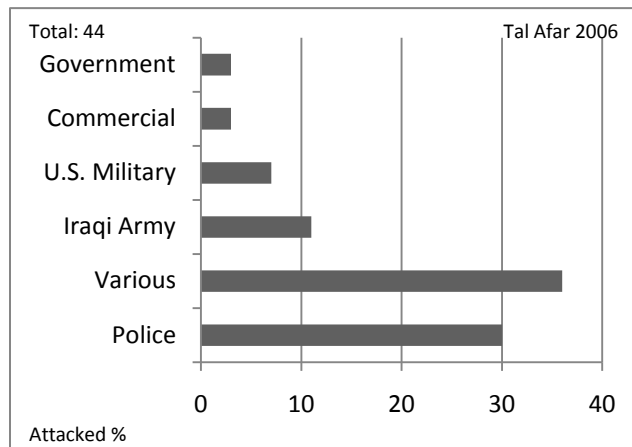


**Table 56.** Attacks in and near Tal Afar, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2005

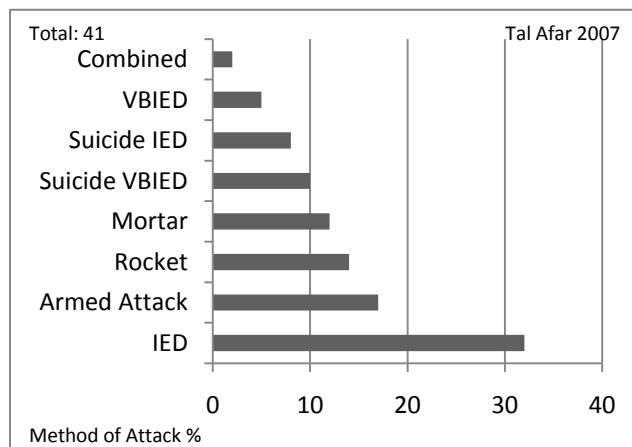
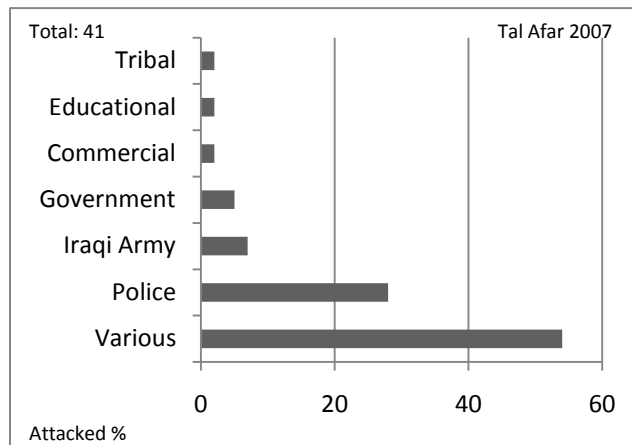




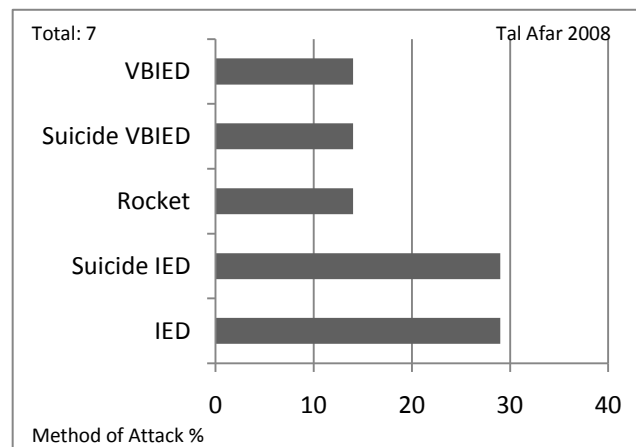
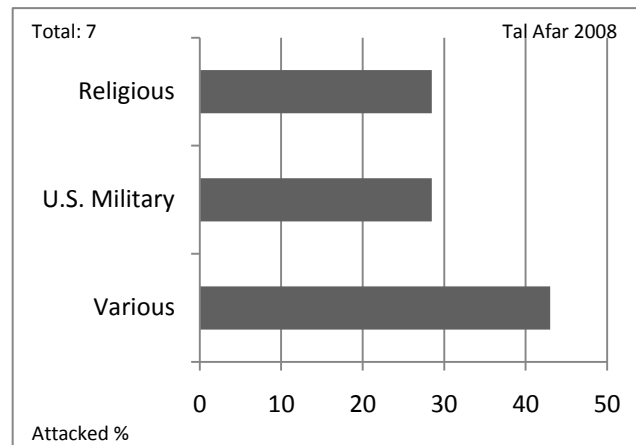
**Table 57.** Attacks in and near Tal Afar, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2006



**Table 58.** Attacks in and near Tal Afar, Ninawa Province, Iraq, 2007

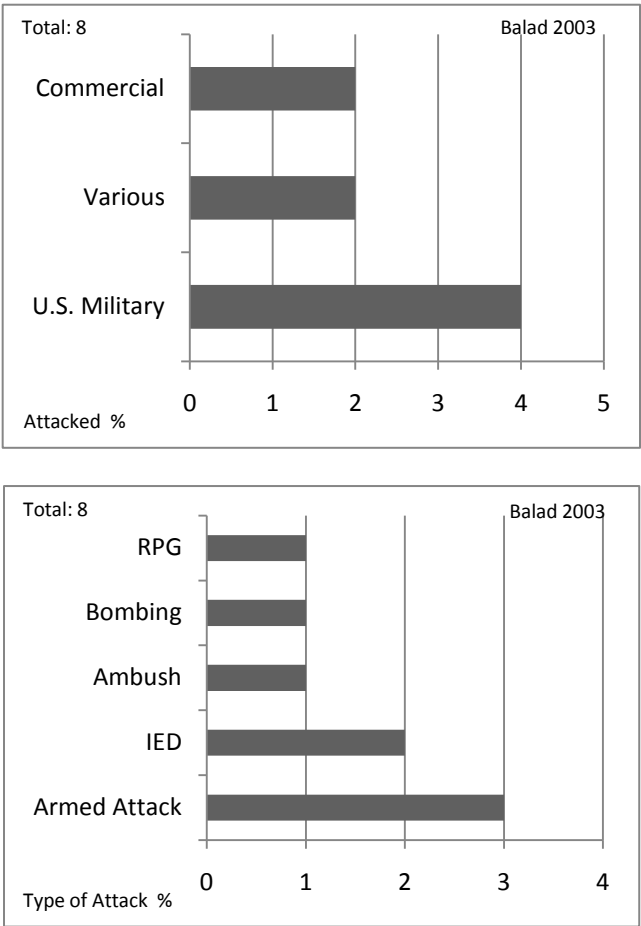


**Table 59.** Attacks in and near Tal Afar, Ninawa Province, Iraq, through mid-2008

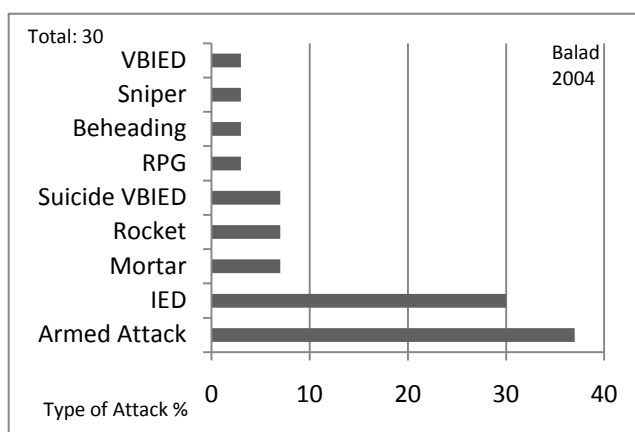
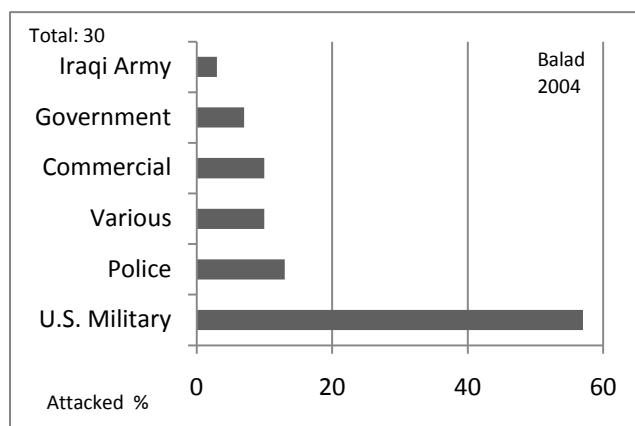


**B.10    ATTACKS IN SALAH AD DIN PROVINCE, IRAQ, 2003 THROUGH MID-2008**

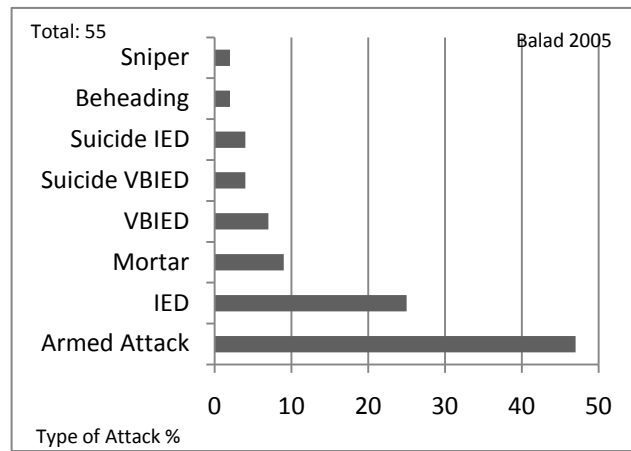
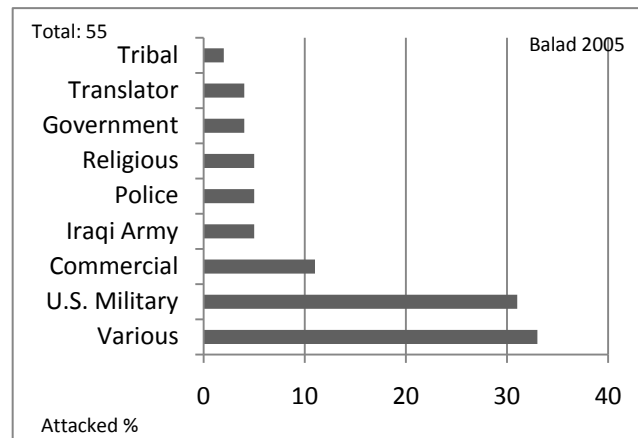
**Table 60.** Attacks in and near Balad, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2003



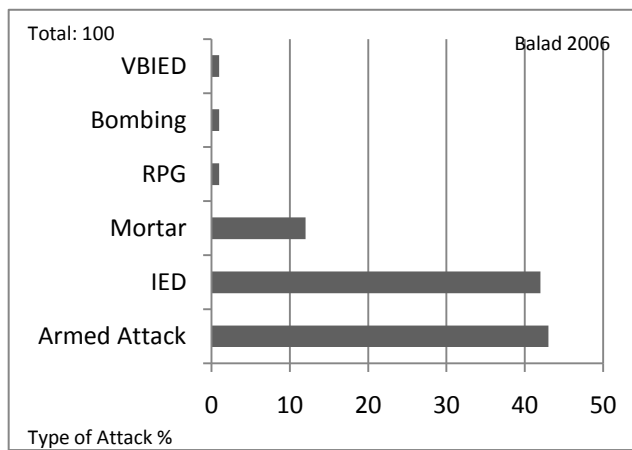
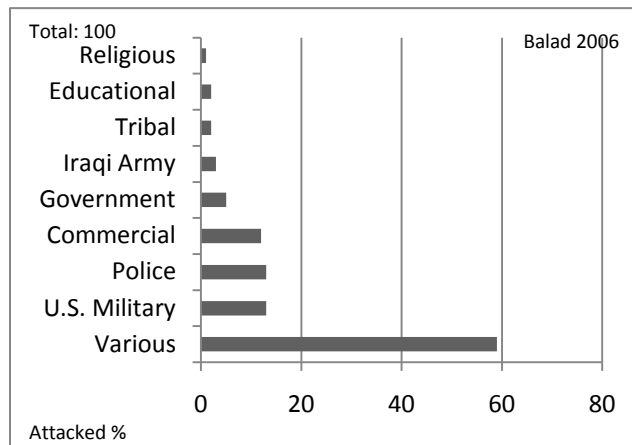
**Table 61.** Attacks in and near Balad, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2004



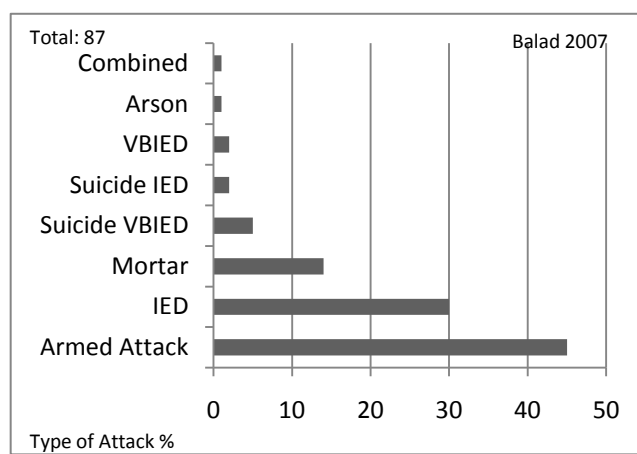
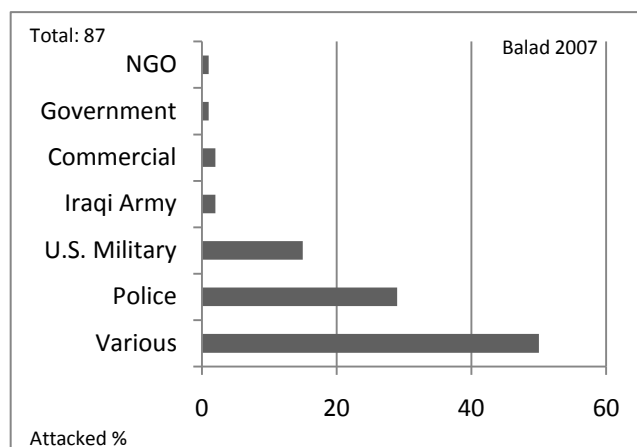
**Table 62.** Attacks in and near Balad, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2005



**Table 63.** Attacks in and near Balad, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2006

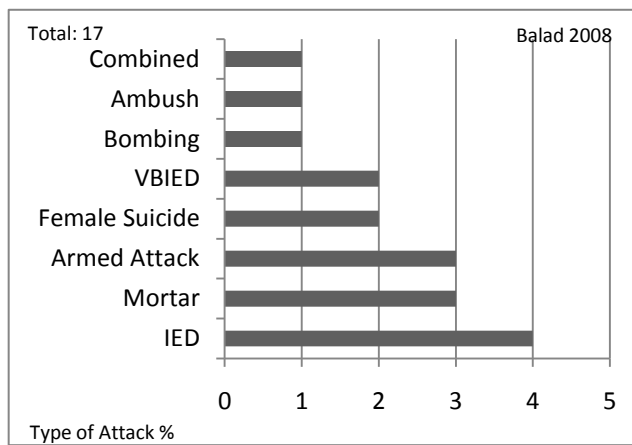
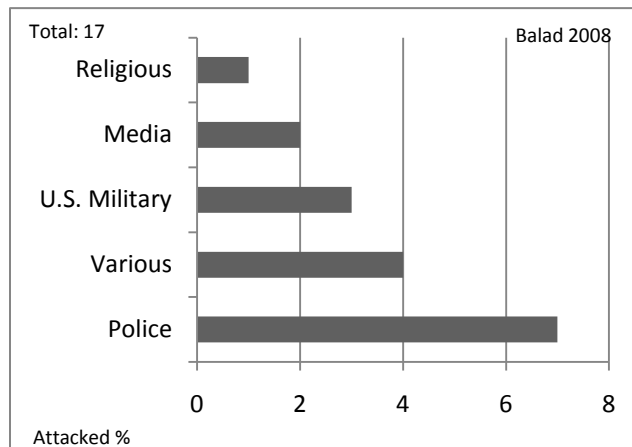


**Table 64.** Attacks in and near Balad, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2007

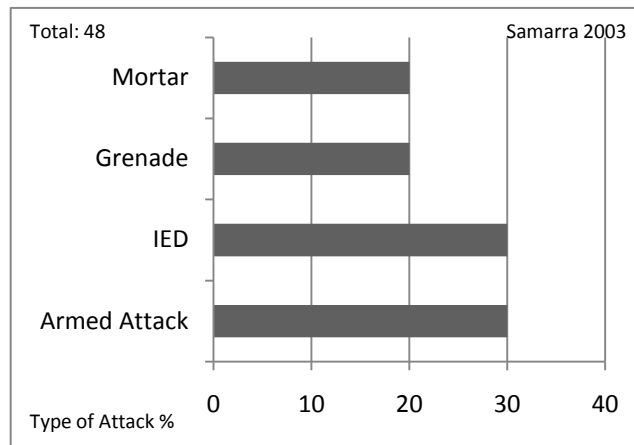
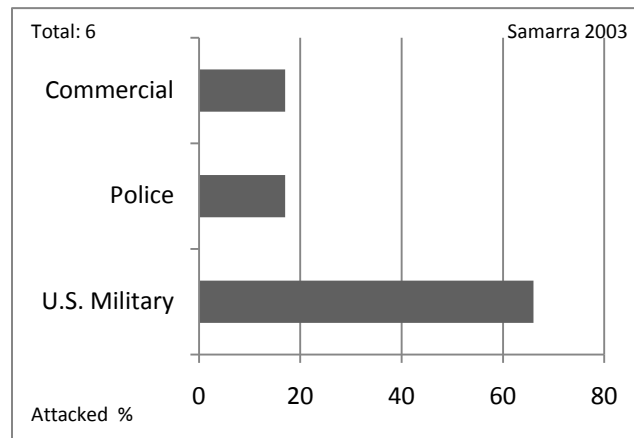




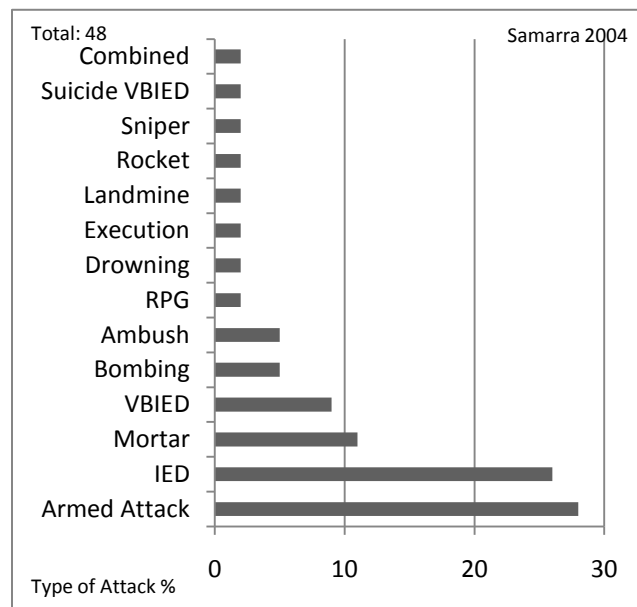
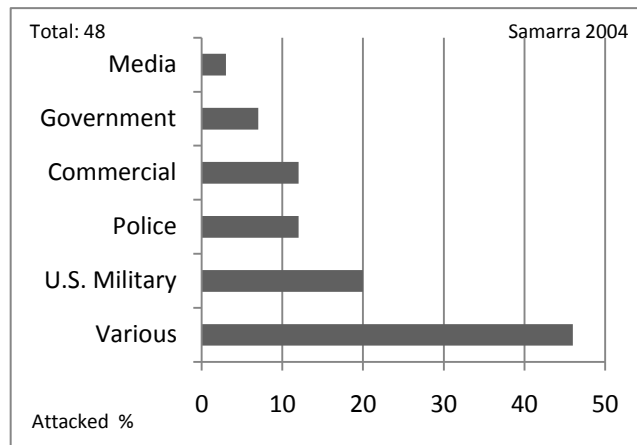
**Table 65.** Attacks in and near Balad, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, through mid-2008



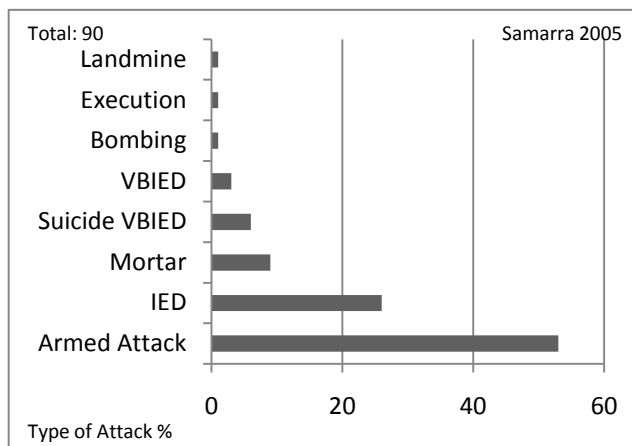
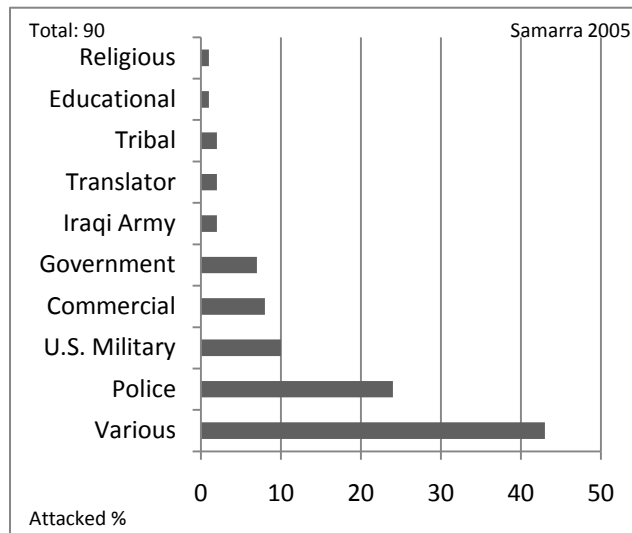
**Table 66.** Attacks in and near Samarra, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2003



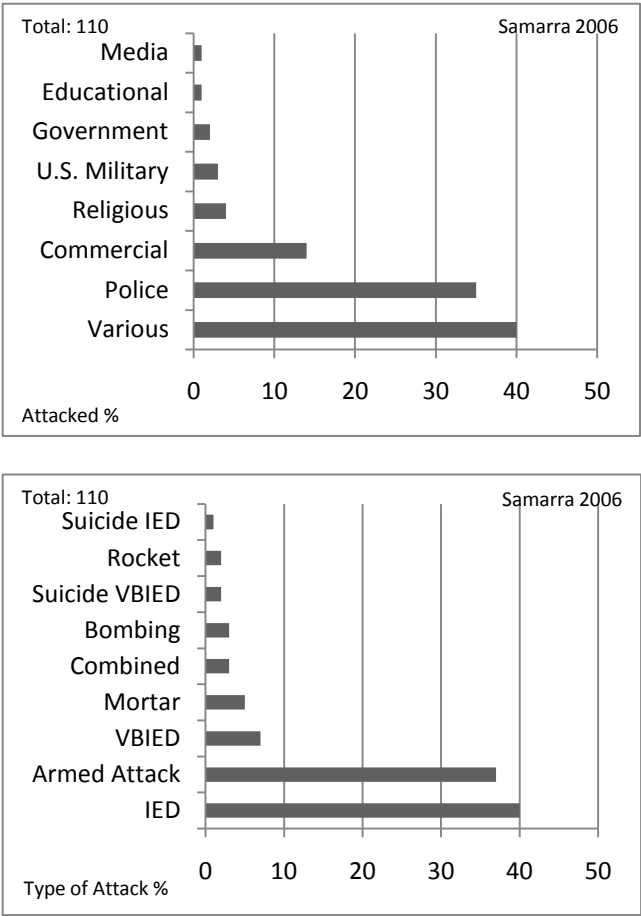
**Table 67.** Attacks in and near Samarra, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2004



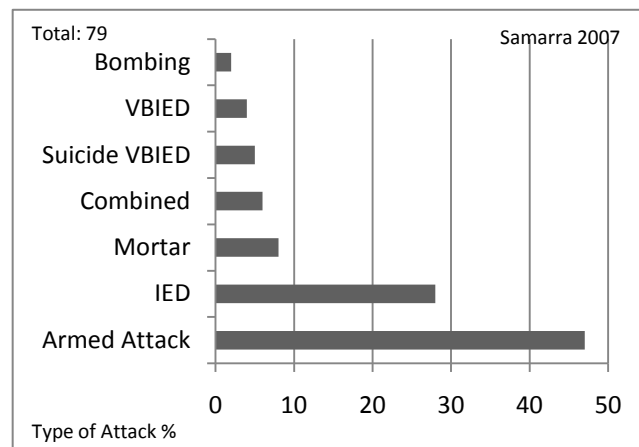
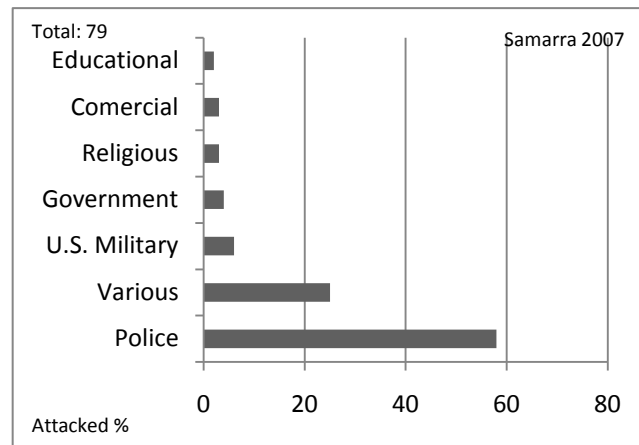
**Table 68.** Attacks in and near Samarra, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2005



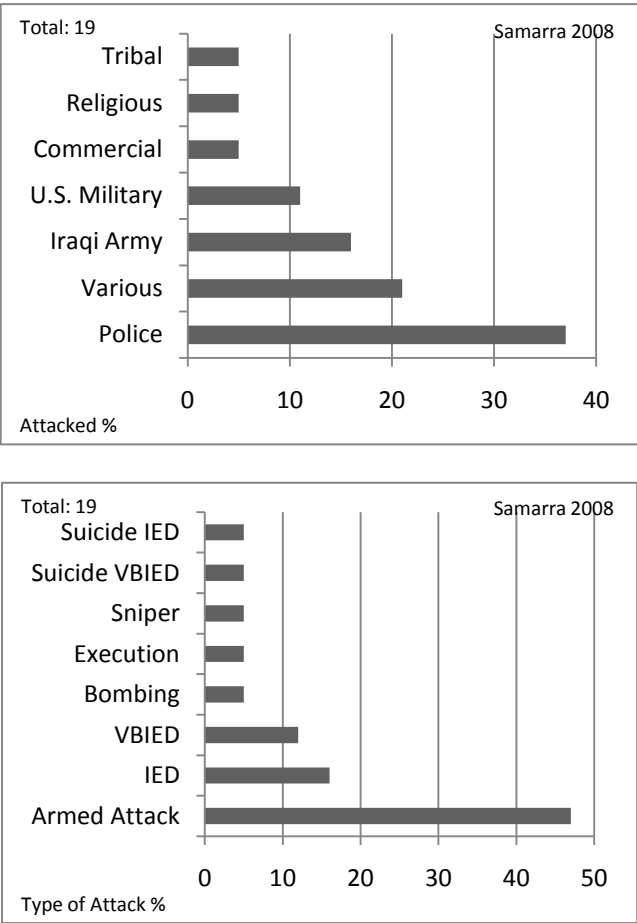
**Table 69.** Attacks in and near Samarra, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2006



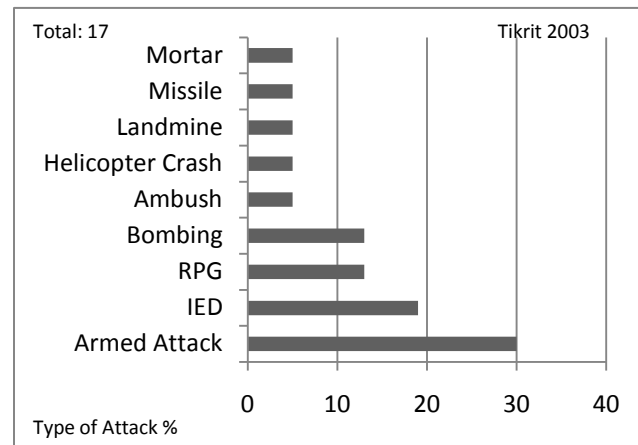
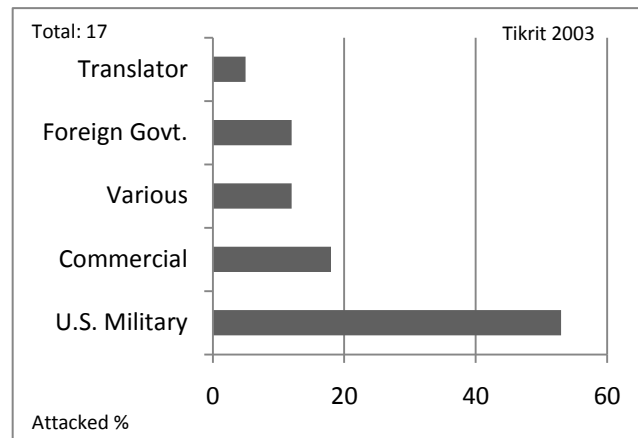
**Table 70.** Attacks in and near Samarra, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2007



**Table 71.** Attacks in and near Samarra, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, through mid-2008

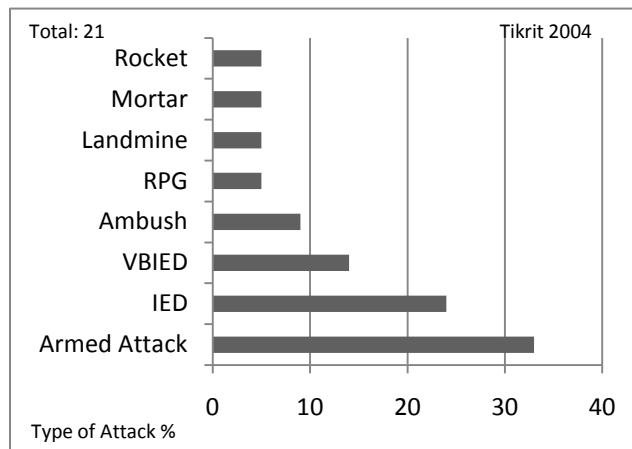
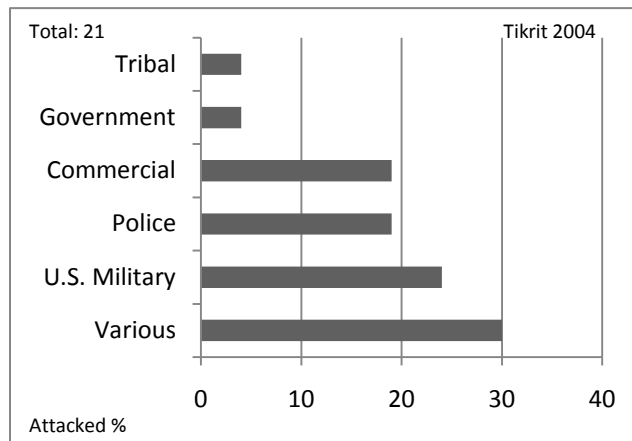


**Table 72.** Attacks in and near Tikrit, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2003

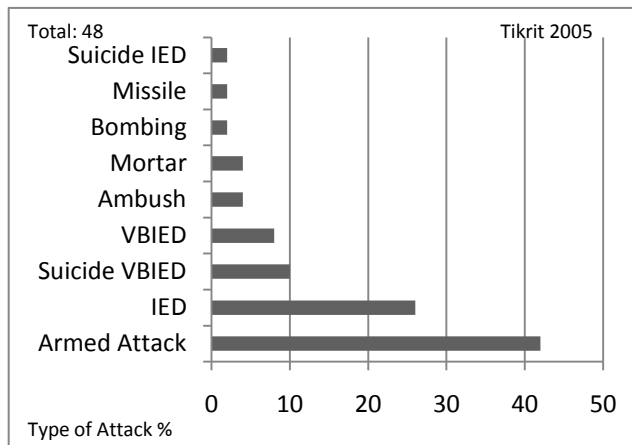
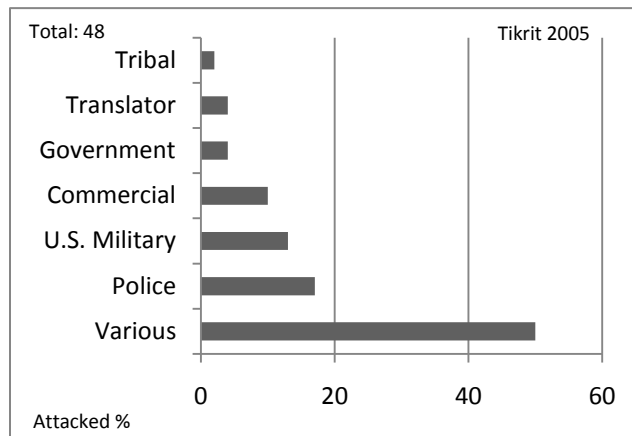




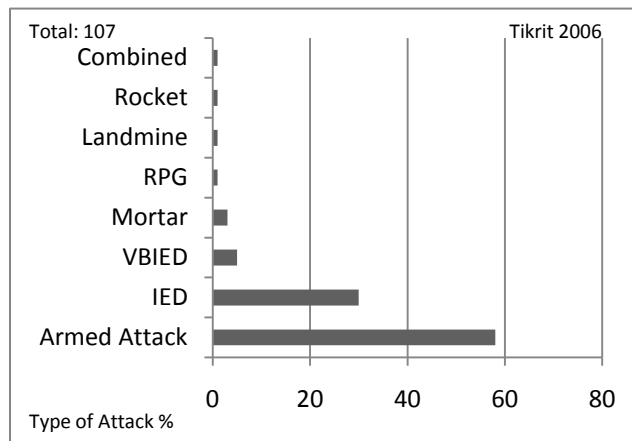
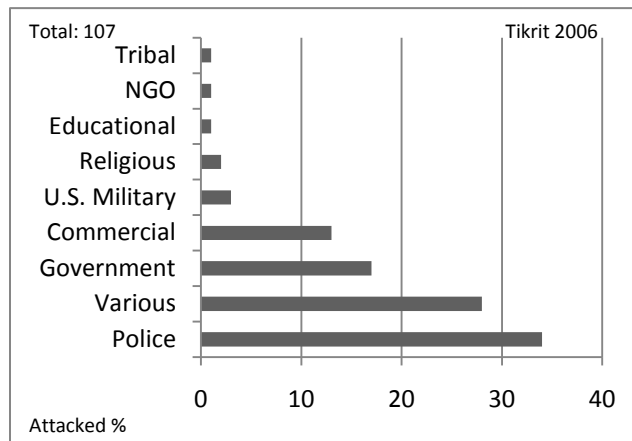
**Table 73.** Attacks in and near Tikrit, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2004



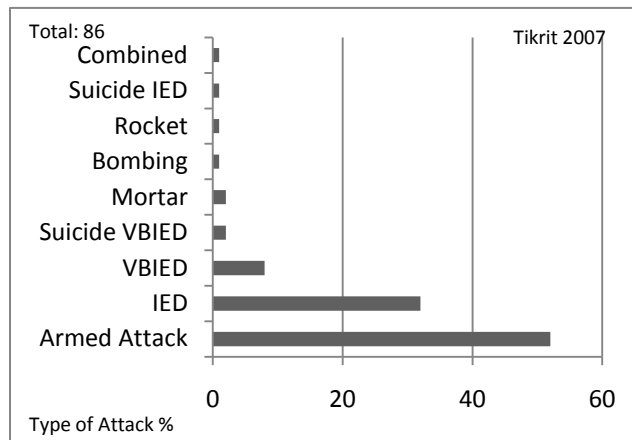
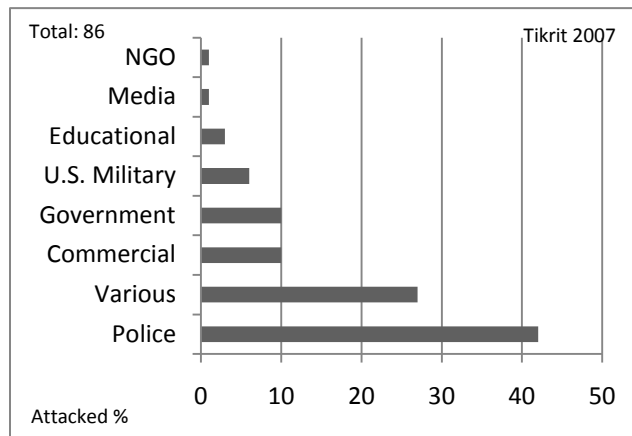
**Table 74.** Attacks in and near Tikrit, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2005



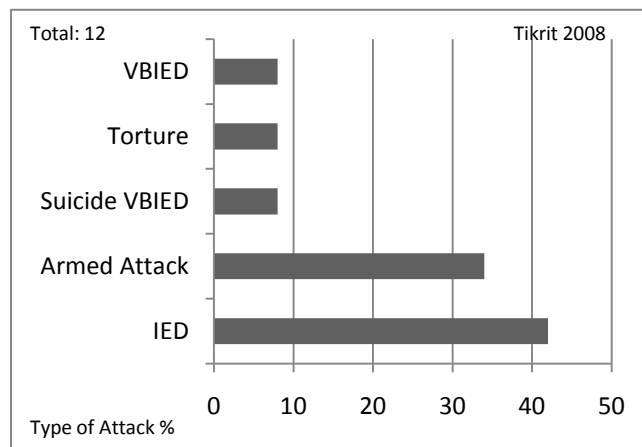
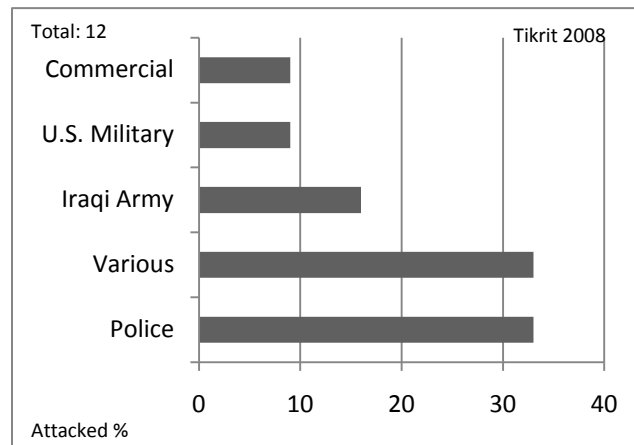
**Table 75.** Attacks in and near Tikrit, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2006



**Table 76.** Attacks in and near Tikrit, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, 2007



**Table 77.** Attacks in and near Tikrit, Salah Ad Din Province, Iraq, through mid-2008



## **APPENDIX C**

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. How many times have you deployed to Iraq?
  - a. When and where were you deployed?
  - b. What type of operations did you conduct (High-Intensity, Low-Intensity, Counterinsurgency)?
2. At what level of operations did you lead/participate (Brigade, Battalion, Company, Platoon, or Squad)?
  - a. What was your Task Organization/Configuration?
3. What was your unit's Task and Purpose?
4. Can you describe your train-up for deployment to Iraq?
  - a. Did you attend a Combat Training Center?
  - b. Did a Mobile Training Team travel to your homestation?
  - c. Can you describe your training emphasis and essential tasks prior to deployment?
5. Execution
  - a. What sort of Higher Support/External Assistance did you receive prior to or during operations?
  - b. Were your tactics, techniques, and procedures effective?
  - c. Did (and how) you record debriefs/AARs?
  - d. How was information/lessons gathered, shared, and stored?
  - e. Did you apply lessons learned on your next operation?
  - f. Did you apply lessons learned @ homestation?
  - g. Was your gathering of information/lessons more formal or informal?

6. Insurgency

- a. Can you describe adaptation of the insurgency while you were deployed?

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